

CHALLENGING THE BOUNDARIES  
OF MEDIEVAL HISTORY

STUDIES IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

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VOLUME 22

# CHALLENGING THE BOUNDARIES OF MEDIEVAL HISTORY

The Legacy of Timothy Reuter

Edited by

Patricia Skinner



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## FOREWORD

Henry Mayr-Harting

Timothy Reuter's untimely death in 2002 meant a great personal loss to his family and many friends, and a great loss to the whole world of medieval historical scholarship. Anyone who witnessed the originality and excitement of his Special Subject at Southampton on the Icelandic Sagas, and anyone who knew of his penetrating work on the twelfth-century empire, will appreciate the mighty achievements still to come, from which he was cut off in his prime. As a historian, Tim excelled in expounding the dynamics of rule (including its ritual), warfare, and aristocracy, and where the higher clergy fitted into the latter. Several of his publications created quite a stir. His book *Germany in the Early Middle Ages* (1991) was hailed as going in some respects even further than his teacher Karl Leyser and than John Gillingham in making the Ottonians intelligible not only to professional scholars but also to students and sixth-formers. The book is subtle, lucid, and full of memorable phrases. On Otto I's dealing with the so-called problem of the duchies, for instance, he wrote that 'it was more of a family settlement than an institutional extension of Ottonian rule'. His 1983 paper on 'the imperial church system' of the Ottonians challenged what had almost been an article of faith (that there was such a system) for a century. His critical acumen made him extraordinarily powerful in mounting such challenges, particularly as he was always as well read as anyone was in the sources and the secondary literature. Most scholars interested in the Ottonian Church thought that he had exaggerated his case, but everyone (including distinguished German historians like Rudolf Schieffer) has been forced to clarify and modify his or her position as a result.

Tim was extraordinarily generous, both with his time and knowledge, and also in his judgements. His critical acumen and his generosity were two sides of the same coin. Rather as Goethe said of Mozart's *Magic Flute* — that it took more imagination to appreciate than to criticize its plot — so it often takes a great deal of critical power to appreciate an approach very different from one's own. Tim

freely argued with his colleagues' views, but always with good humour if sometimes humorously. He would have subscribed to G. K. Chesterton's dictum, 'I hate a quarrel because it breaks up an argument'. Nobody will be able to ignore what Tim has published, though many may have some argument or other with some of it, and that is a situation which he himself would surely have relished. His work has great permanent value, and his personality will endure in the memory.

Oxford, June 2007

## INTRODUCTION

Patricia Skinner

Timothy Reuter's career as a medieval historian of distinction was cut cruelly short by his illness and sudden death in 2002. Yet scholars of English and continental medieval history continue to draw inspiration from his prodigious collection of research papers, his admirable textbook on early medieval Germany,<sup>1</sup> and the numerous edited volumes he worked so hard to produce (not least volume III of the *New Cambridge Medieval History*).<sup>2</sup> The key to his enduring influence lies in his willingness to compare, to challenge traditional historiographical boundaries (particularly his call to the 'Anglolexic' scholarly community to confront its insularity and explore the rich output of its non-Anglophone neighbours), and to incorporate the insights of other disciplines into his own assessment of medieval culture. Like many of his generation, he embraced anthropology as a useful tool for interpreting medieval ritual practices; he engaged in debates over the existence and extent of the transformation of the year 1000;<sup>3</sup> and he worked tirelessly to bring information technology and medieval studies together in his creation

<sup>1</sup> Timothy Reuter, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages c. 800–1056* (London: Longman, 1991).

<sup>2</sup> *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. III: c. 900–1024, ed. by Timothy Reuter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). Other volumes edited by Tim include *The Medieval Nobility: Studies on the Ruling Classes of France and Germany from the Sixth to the Twelfth Centuries* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1978); *The Greatest Englishman: Essays on St Boniface and the Church at Crediton* (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1980); *Warriors and Churchmen in the High Middle Ages: Essays Presented to Karl Leyser* (London: Hambledon, 1992); and *Alfred the Great: Papers From the Eleventh Centenary Conference* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003). Following Karl Leyser's death he also edited Leyser's essays as *Communications and Power in Medieval Europe*, 2 vols (London: Hambledon, 1995).

<sup>3</sup> Timothy Reuter, 'Debate: The Feudal Revolution', *Past and Present*, 155 (1997), 177–95.

of a tutorial on the Gregorian reform.<sup>4</sup> As the contributors to this volume make clear, Tim's acute articles, spanning the period from the Carolingian era to the Becket dispute, taking on 'medieval' as a construct along the way, were essential reading for colleagues and students alike. Yet he never did find time to write his really big book, so keen was his desire to make a difference, whether in research or in the more mundane fields of academic administration. Fortunately, thanks to Jinty Nelson's careful editing, some twenty-two of Tim's influential papers, published and unpublished, are now gathered in a volume published by Cambridge University Press in 2006.<sup>5</sup> The fact that some appear there in English translations from the original German has a certain irony!

Although I had worked alongside Tim at Southampton for five years, and found his support as a colleague both generous and stimulating, the realization of the sheer breadth and scope of his scholarship only really hit home for me when I hosted a commemorative conference for him at Southampton in 2004. What title should it have? Tim had been engaged in just about every aspect of medieval history, as the editor of texts,<sup>6</sup> as their interpreter, and as a participant in debates: 'Texts, Histories and Historiographies', then — that just about covered it.

This volume, however, is not a set of conference proceedings. Some papers from those stimulating three days in July were destined to become parts of books; others already committed. Instead, then, this tribute to Tim's legacy consists of several parts: the first two Reuter memorial lectures (by Chris Wickham and Jinty Nelson) are reprinted here by way of setting out some of the problems Tim addressed in his work. (The Reuter Lectures continue annually at Southampton.<sup>7</sup>) Papers developed from the conference fall into three categories: looking at the histories of secular power relations (Lavelle and Weiler) and the interaction of the medieval Church with its secular benefactors (Barrow), and the more exacting technical

<sup>4</sup> Timothy Reuter, 'The Papacy, Religious Change and Church Reform, 1049–1125' (Glasgow: History Courseware Consortium, 1998).

<sup>5</sup> Timothy Reuter, *Medieval Politics and Modern Mentalities*, ed. by Janet L. Nelson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

<sup>6</sup> Notably *The Annals of Fulda* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992) and (with Francis Tschan) *Adam of Bremen: The History of the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

<sup>7</sup> Published by the University of Southampton. The series also includes Patrick Geary, *Historians as Public Intellectuals* (The Reuter Lecture 2006; Southampton: Centre for Antiquity and the Middle Ages, 2007) and Miri Rubin, *The Global Middle Ages* (The Reuter Lecture 2007; Southampton: Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Culture, 2008).

problems of producing the scholarly editions on which historians reconstructing these histories rely (Warner, Wahlgren-Smith, and Hartmann). Missing from the conference was any real consideration of episcopal power; since Tim was about to start work on a major project on this theme, I thought it appropriate to choose this as my own contribution to the volume.

Our brief in this volume, then, has been to take up Tim's comparativist challenge and to explore sometimes familiar historiographical themes from unexpected angles. As Henry Mayr-Harting points out in his Foreword, this does not mean that we accept the Reuter version of events at every turn; but we would hope, at least, that our contributions to this memorial do justice to the questions Tim tried to get everyone to ask.



## PROBLEMS IN DOING COMPARATIVE HISTORY

Chris Wickham

I have been reading a lot of Tim Reuter's work recently, to help me think about comparison. Tim was an instinctive comparativist, always very conscious of his double heritage, English and German; I think this view crystallized above all in his time in the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* and was confirmed when he and his family came back to Southampton. One can see it most clearly in his acute *aperçus* on historiographical issues, which I shall come back to; if in Germany Tim felt English, as he said in his Southampton inaugural, back in England he felt Continental, constantly infuriated by the theoretical and methodological innocence of English/British historians and their lack of interest in the lands beyond the Channel (and I can't blame him). But he also wanted to compare the *past*; if we are forever deprived of his major comparative work, the planned book on tenth- and eleventh-century bishops, his articles are full of implicit comparisons, and often explicit ones, as for example in his important work on the roots of the medieval German *Sonderweg*. Here he worries constantly at the issue of difference, at how it was that intensive lordship crystallized at the level of magnates rather than at that of the king in Germany, unlike in England or, eventually, France (though Tim — needless to say — always explicitly rejected the narrative of failure and blame that underpinned, and for some still underpins, German historiography on the subject). In searching for an explanation of German difference, he pinpointed the relative lack of a legal role for German king-emperors (this I think was his central difference); the long-term weakness of territorial organization; a relative lack of concentration

I am grateful to Nicholas Brooks, Conrad Leyser, Jinty Nelson, and Trish Skinner for material help in writing this article, and to Leslie Brubaker for a critique. This text is substantially that of my Reuter Lecture of 2004, with signs of oral delivery deliberately left in, and has slight corrections to the version published by the University of Southampton in 2005.

of resources; the differing nature of political culture in different European kingdoms, already in the tenth century but in particular in the twelfth. But he always stressed that Germany was not really *so* different from elsewhere; it is just that it was a bit, and the ways it was turned out to be significant.<sup>1</sup> His careful, multi-faceted, nuanced approach is a model for us, and I want to try to pursue it today.

The key point is that comparison is essential. I don't think you can properly do history without it. Some of this comparison is chronological, and historians are used to it simply because they recognize that they study change, and thus know that they have to confront before vs. after. But for me the crucial issue of comparison is geographical: why things happen in different ways in different places. You cannot get away without confronting this in history, or, if you do, you are the weaker for it. There are, I think, two main reasons why comparison is so necessary. The first is cultural solipsism: if you don't compare, you end up believing that one type of historical development is normal, normative, and that every other is a deviation. People who don't compare almost always study their own country, and their focus on it creates a Europe — a world — of islands, with no relationship to each other, in each of which not only are the patterns of social change wholly distinct, but so are even the questions historians ask. Worse, these insularities in nearly every case match up with national teleologies, the study in each country of the historical reasons why *We* are special, better than — or at least different from — the *Others*, the English with the nation-state, the Italians with the Renaissance. We as historians, neutral analysts of the past, we hope, should be studying those reasons, so as to explain why *other* people developed them, not reproducing them ourselves.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Timothy Reuter, 'Medieval Politics and Modern Mentalities', inaugural lecture, University of Southampton (Southampton, 1996); Reuter, 'The Medieval German *Sonderweg*? The Empire and its Rulers in the High Middle Ages', in *Kings and Kingship in Medieval Europe*, ed. by Anne J. Duggan (London: Kings College London CLAMS, 1993), pp. 179–211; Reuter, 'The Making of England and Germany, 850–1050: Points of Comparison and Difference', in *Medieval Europeans: Studies in Ethnic Identity and National Perspectives in Medieval Europe*, ed. by Alfred P. Smyth (London: Macmillan, 1998), pp. 53–70; Reuter, 'Nur im Westen was neues? Das Werden prämoderner Staatsformen im europäischen Hochmittelalter', in *Deutschland und der Westen Europas im Mittelalter*, ed. by Joachim Ehlers, Vorträge und Forschungen, 56 (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke, 2002), pp. 327–50, all now in Timothy Reuter, *Medieval Politics and Modern Mentalities*, ed. by Janet L. Nelson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

<sup>2</sup> I have complained about this before, most recently in 'The Early Middle Ages and National Identity', in *Die Deutung der mittelalterlichen Gesellschaft in der Moderne (19.–21. Jahrhundert)*, ed. by Natalie Fryde, Pierre Monnet, Otto Gerhard Oexle, and Leszek Zygmier, Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte, 217 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2006), pp. 107–22.

The second reason for the necessity of comparison could be called quasi-Popperian: comparison is the closest that historians can get to testing, attempting to falsify, their own explanations. Popper's image was of course the laboratory: you did the same experiment over and over, in controlled conditions, and then your enemies did as well, and only then could a hypothesis stand, not proved, but at least not falsified. Popper would not have thought that two regions, or two countries, were sufficiently similar to allow such control, and indeed he did not have a high opinion of history as a scientific discipline. But history's rigour is that of the human sciences, which all have to face the variabilities of human nature, and in this disciplinary environment a certain element of flexibility is defensible — history, so to speak, has elastic theoretical structures rather than steel ones. Historical comparison *does* disprove hypotheses. The demise of late Roman city councils, *curiae*, in the fifth and sixth centuries, cannot be a factor in the breakdown of urbanism itself, as supposed by many historians of the West because the two processes were (they thought) contemporaneous, given that the briefest look at the East, in particular Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, shows urban economies happily outlasting *curiae* by centuries. Similarly, the Black Death on its own cannot have caused the end of serfdom, as Michael Postan argued, if demographic decline was also the context for the so-called 'second serfdom' in eastern Europe, as Robert Brenner pointed out. There are many parallels to these examples, but there need to be more. It seems to me that no historical explanation can be regarded as convincing without some attempt at comparative testing; everything else is provisional.<sup>3</sup>

But there are, all the same, problems. Hence my title. Comparison is hard, as Tim said too.<sup>4</sup> It is hard to get your mind around more than one thing at once; it is hard to be equally convincing in two areas at once, let alone more than two. I want to discuss here three of the problems that comparison has to face, so that we are not naïve about it. Then in the second part of this paper I will offer a brief example, a comparison between England and France in the tenth century, not so much to add to empirical historical knowledge as to give instances of how the problems of my title might be overcome.

<sup>3</sup> Karl R. Popper, *The Poverty of Historicism* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1957), for history and other social sciences; for the examples, see J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 104–202, for data on *curiae*; R. Brenner, 'Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-industrial Europe', *Past and Present*, 70 (1976), 30–74, esp. pp. 37–42.

<sup>4</sup> E.g. Reuter, 'Making of England and Germany', p. 54.

The first problem is empirical, of course. The sorts of documentation provided by different parts of medieval Europe (even more so non-medieval and non-European regions) is hugely diverse; it is hard even to identify points of comparison if the material at your disposal is too different. I have recently been involved in an international project focussed on the comparative history of the western European land market in the central and later Middle Ages; we had to face at once the problem that the evidence for most of southern Europe came from documents registering the sale and price of land parcels, whereas that from England, and also much of Germany, came almost exclusively from seigneurial records (such as manorial court rolls) which registered not prices but the dues lords took from each sale, a much more mediated and indeed problematic source. (It did not make it any easier that most of the initial historiography on the subject was from England, the region with the least typical evidence.)<sup>5</sup> Or, to take an early medieval example, if we want to discuss the relationship between central power and local aristocracies in the major European polities, a popular field of study, we will have a great deal of trouble with Visigothic Spain, where some 95 per cent of written evidence on the subject comes from central government legislation, whether secular or ecclesiastical; most studies of the issue in Spain have been rather too legalistic, but they do have a good excuse for that tendency. And, as a very general rule, there is quite a difference between the sort of things one can say about societies where most of the written evidence at our disposal is narrative, and those where most evidence consists of legal documents: between seventh-century and eighth-century England, for example, or between tenth-century Saxony and tenth-century northern Italy. Aristocratic intrigue or ecclesiastical moralism get privileged in the first group of societies; landed relationships and rural exploitation get privileged in the second. And so they should; but it does not help comparison. If we want to understand why Otto I behaved differently in Saxony from the way he did in Italy, the first obstacle will lie here. We would have to be unusually incautious not to realize it, but it would remain an obstacle.

The second problem is historiographical, and it stems from the solipsism I mentioned earlier. If we want to get into the history of another region, we will of course expect to do it with the help of the historians who have already written about it, and who know its history better than we do. But the problem is that they may well be interested in wholly different things from us, and they may even have different assumptions about what causes what in history. One of my favourite pages in Tim's

<sup>5</sup> *Le marché de la terre au moyen âge*, ed. by Laurent Feller and Chris Wickham, 2 vols, Collection de L'École Française de Rome, 370 (Rome: École Française de Rome, 2005).

writings is his extended riff at the end of his contribution to the 'feudal revolution' debate about why it was that this debate has so little resonance in Germany, unlike in France, where it was so fierce in the 1990s:

The *seigneurie banale*, whose origins, nature, extent and relation to public order are ultimately what this whole debate is about, seems to me, as a specialist in German history, to be something they have in Other Countries. But a [hypothetical French monograph on] *Espaces ecclésiastiques et réseaux familiaux (dans la Bavière Luitpoldingienne)* might well turn out to be full of it, just as an equally hypothetical German monograph on *Adelsherrschaft und Reformmönchtum in Aquitanien des 10. Jahrhunderts* would probably draw more on *Selbstverständnis* than on *Grundherrschaft* (itself not quite the same thing as *seigneurie banale*) for its conceptual apparatus. I could not be sure whether this would be because the French find *seigneurie banale* where the Germans find *Selbstverständnis*, or because one or the other or both really had been in the regions in question all along and I just had not known how or where to look for them; moreover, I suspect that most of us would not be able to choose.<sup>6</sup>

And Tim was quite right; there is a game of mirrors here, made worse not better by the fact that we are dealing with sophisticated historiographical traditions.

This problem forces us, if we are interested in comparison, to do two further things. Firstly, we must go straight to the sources, in a spirit of intense disbelief, to see whether they can give us the comparative elements that the historiography denies us; we must understand the empirical bases of every local debate, not just take our interpretations from the wider syntheses which are always available, and which we doubtless started with. Secondly, we must gain an understanding of why it is that historians argue as they do in any given region; what it is they have seized on as crucial issues, and what these issues have meant to historians across time; how their preoccupations fit into their local Grand Narratives of nationhood; and why they have chosen not to study certain things, as well. We must get inside national debates and be prepared to critique them; we must be prepared to translate, not just languages, but cultures. Not only critically, though; they may be right, and we may be wrong. I am used to looking for the tracks of the *seigneurie banale* in Italy (or at least the *signoria territoriale*, the Italian version); German historians are not, at least when they study Germany; but I cannot assume they have simply missed it, for it may genuinely not be there. And if it isn't then I might want to see if its tracks are really as clear as I thought in Italy too. Either way, it is necessary to get a sense of why historians of any given national group act in the way they do.

<sup>6</sup> Timothy Reuter, 'Debate: The Feudal Revolution', *Past and Present*, 155 (1997), 177–95 (p. 195); the square brackets introduce phrases from elsewhere on the same page, for sense.

Let us look at a specific example of this, at least briefly: the Spanish preoccupation with the year 711, the year of the Arab conquest. This is a sufficiently key date that it is the marker of the beginning of the Middle Ages in Spain — the Visigoths are taught in ancient history departments. (Al-Andalus is taught in Arab studies departments, however; the *edad media* is restricted to Christian Spain.) Everything about the Arab impact on Spain and about the nature of the areas the Arabs never reached is contested. Including politically: the instrumentalization of the Battle of Covadonga of 718, the supposed starting-point for the Asturian fight-back against the Arabs and thus the beginning of the Christian Reconquest, by the Franco régime and the twentieth-century Catholic hierarchy produced a Left-wing reply in the 1970s that stressed the primitive, kin-based, nature of the early Asturian kingdom. So, the Right argue that Pelagius, the first Asturian king, was a Roman-Visigothic and Christian leader with a Mission, the Left that the Asturias had never been fully Romanized or Gothicized at all; to excavate a Roman villa in the Asturias becomes a potentially Right-wing political act. Not always, of course (archaeologists are usually Leftists in most southern European countries); but the issue is strikingly politicized. It is sufficient to read the amazingly tense discussions, apparently a faithful record of what people said, published as part of the proceedings of a conference on the Asturian kingdom held at Covadonga itself in 2001, to get an idea of the charged nature of the debate. An equivalent tension has greeted Luís Caballero's attempt to redate most rural Visigothic church architecture to the eighth century on stylistic grounds, because it would therefore post-date the Arab conquest: again, the current Spanish penchant for transcribing academic debates verbatim means that the proceedings of Caballero's Mérida conference on the topic in 1999 makes equally illuminating, gripping, reading.<sup>7</sup> I asked Caballero if it really mattered which century the churches dated to; it was clear that the question made no real sense to him at all — 711 was so obviously a totalizing date.

I am personally highly unconvinced that the Arab conquest was as total a turning-point as almost everyone thinks in Spain, from whatever party, or academic faction, or region (for regional identity matters quite as much — Basque and Catalan historiographies are distinct again). The structures of Spanish history that

<sup>7</sup> *La época de la monarquía asturiana: actas del simposio celebrado en Covadonga (8-10 de octubre de 2001)* (Oviedo: Real Instituto de Estudios Asturianos, 2002); *Visigodos y Omeyas: un debate entre la antigüedad tardía y la alta edad media*, ed. by L. Caballero Zoreda and P. Mateos Cruz (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2001). The book which set off the kin-based interpretation of the Asturias was Abilio Barbero and Marcelo Vigil, *La formación del feudalismo en la Península Ibérica* (Barcelona: Critica, 1988).

matter to me seem to have carried on without much change across that divide, in most places. All the same, I realized eventually that I was wrong to doubt the importance of what Caballero was doing. The seventh century in the Spanish Meseta, the high inland plateau where most of his churches are, was the core of the Visigothic kingdom, based in the centre of the Meseta at Toledo; the aristocracy could easily have founded churches in their rural residences, which we know on other grounds were scattered across the plateau. In the eighth century, however, the Meseta was a frontier, and parts of the northern plateau seem to have become a political no-man's-land, the locus of a society of peasant landowners by the time our documents start in the tenth century — if 711 was a social break anywhere, it was in the northern Meseta; if the churches date from after that in the North, then they represent foci of wealth that cannot be identified in any other way, and they notably change our image of *that* region, at least. Seventh-century churches, then, are what we would expect; eighth-century churches would change our paradigm, at least in the northern Meseta (it is different in the South . . .). So the debate about 711 does matter, sometimes; but one has to get inside the historiography, and compare it with the source material, to see why and how it matters. Nor does our task stop there; there is an equally tense debate about the eighth- to tenth-century Meseta, whose parameters and subtexts one would also have to unpick, and there are others again on the Arab side. But I hope I have said enough to emphasize the complexity of the task; and all that is before one even gets to compare.<sup>8</sup>

The third problem is pinning down what is actually significant to compare, and what is actually comparable: you need to compare like with like. There is no point in analysing patterns of peasant status in region A if you want to compare them with the monastic rules of region B, obviously; but peasant status is only a mediated guide to aristocratic status criteria, too, and if you were going to use the one to illuminate the other, serfs in region A as against vassals in region B, you would have to proceed with considerable care. Similarly, if you wanted to stick with peasant status, you would have to be careful with the word *colonus*, which does not at

<sup>8</sup> For Visigothic villas, see most recently A. Chavarría Arnau, *El final de las 'villae' en 'Hispania' (siglos IV–VII D.C.)*, Bibliothèque de l'Antiquité tardive, 7 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007); for the simplicity of post-711 Meseta society, see for one wing of the debate I. Martín Viso, *Poblamiento y estructuras sociales en el Norte de la Península Ibérica (siglos VI–XIII)* (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 2000), pp. 91–177; J. Escalona Monge, *Sociedad y territorio en la alta edad media castellana*, British Archaeological Reports, International Series, 1079 (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2002), pp. 62–77. All three argue for a simplification process beginning already in the Visigothic period.

all mean the same in different regions; sometimes it means a free dependent tenant, sometimes an unfree one, sometimes both, sometimes any peasant, including land-owners. That slippage is significant in itself, but you have to interpret before you can compare. Also, what is it that one is comparing? Societies are complex wholes, and each one tends to have whole sets of elements that are individually more, or less, similar to those in another society; does one try to counterpose whole societies, in all their complexity, or does one choose a single element and compare that? The problem is that much harder now that most historians have abandoned the legal history paradigm, in which *Lex Salica* or Ine's law code supposedly characterized the procedures of a whole region, and have recognized that local practices were almost infinitely variable, for it becomes so easy to get lost in local difference, and the problems of documentation begin to seem insuperable. In my view, single elements are the only practical way into fruitful comparison; if we try to set two complex social realities side by side, our focus tends to dissolve, and we tend to end up saying that they are both similar and different, which does not get us very far. But how do we study the elements? Here, I want to characterize two reasonably well-known techniques, which come from separate (and in part antithetical) historical traditions, but which seem to me to fit surprisingly well together: Carlo Ginzburg's concept of clues, and Max Weber's concept of ideal types.

Ginzburg developed his idea of clues in an elegant article of 1979, in which he argued that Freud, the art historian Morelli, and Sherlock Holmes were all working inside a deductive procedure taken from medical practice, in which one takes signs on or in the human body and puts them together to produce a diagnosis. He called this a *paradigma indiziario* or *semeiotico*, a clue-based or semiotic paradigm, and he defended what he called its 'elastic rigour', an image I have already used in this paper. He did not actually say in the article that he was proposing a methodology for historians, but it is implicit, and he has made it explicit elsewhere: this is, actually, how historians work much of the time, to construct their worlds.<sup>9</sup> Ginzburg used the word *spia* in the title of the article to describe these signs, and the English translation correctly uses the word 'clue'. *Spia* means more than that in Italian, however. It means 'spy' or 'informer' as well, and it also means 'spyhole' or 'peephole': something you look through. I think that is a useful image for us: clues as spyholes through which we could look to pinpoint elements of a social reality.

<sup>9</sup> Carlo Ginzburg, 'Spie', in his *Miti emblematici* (Turin: Einaudi, 1986), pp. 158–209 (see p. 192 for the quote); trans. as 'Clues: Morelli, Freud and Sherlock Holmes', *History Workshop*, 9 (1980), 5–36. Ginzburg's book appeared in English as *Myths, Emblems, Clues*, trans. by John Tedeschi and Anne C. Tedeschi (London: Hutchinson Radius, 1990).

Weber's concept of ideal types was quite different; he proposed that they were abstractions from real phenomena in any given society, created solely for the purpose of comparison. His most famous examples of this, such as 'bureaucracy' or 'charisma', were multi-element characterizations; they did not have to have all these elements in actual societies, but, if they did not, then one had to explain it, comparatively. By far the best example of an ideal type in medieval historiography is Marc Bloch's characterization of feudal society at the end of *La société féodale*: a subject peasantry; land grants instead of salaries; the supremacy of a warrior class; ties of obedience and protection inside that class; a fragmentation of political power; but, nonetheless, the survival of kinship and the state. This has wrongly been taken as a definition, in that you need all this to make a society 'feudal' in Bloch's eyes. Rather, it is a guide to comparison — not by chance, it immediately precedes his brief discussion of Japan.<sup>10</sup> What he meant was that these were things to look for. If you had everything else on this list but political power was not fragmented, as in England after 900, or everything else but a salaried military stratum, as often from the thirteenth century onwards (as in the weirdly named 'bastard' feudalism), then this marked out a difference, which would have to be analysed comparatively. Ideal types can be very ramshackle constructs, as Susan Reynolds warns, especially if they are generated by local Grand Narratives of nationhood, putting together elements that do not really belong with each other, and they are unhelpful if they do; but, if they are tight, they are guides to really comparable elements in societies, which we can use.<sup>11</sup> I would see these as *spie*, as spyholes into real societies, too.

It seems to me, then, that if we want to compare across different societies, a good way to do it is by taking *spie* which are sufficiently similar in each society that they are comparable — because we have characterized them carefully enough, as Weber did — but which articulate with the other elements of each society in different ways, which are themselves illuminating. What would be good *spie*? Bloch's ideal-type feudal society, evidently, would be one; but he dealt with that already in 1940, and we do not need to repeat it here. We might look at how the land market works in different societies; or at how the collective local institutions

<sup>10</sup> Marc Bloch, *La société féodale* (Paris: Michel, 1939–40), II, 249–50; trans. as *Feudal Society*, trans. by L. A. Manyon (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961), p. 446. For Bloch and Weber, see Chris Wickham, 'Le forme del feudalesimo', *Settimane di studio del centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo*, 47 (2000), 15–51 (pp. 34–38).

<sup>11</sup> Susan Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals: The Medieval Evidence Reinterpreted* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 10–11.

known as *consulats* or *concejos* or *comuni*, which appeared across much of western Europe in the twelfth century, articulated differently in different local societies.<sup>12</sup> Another good *spia*, as Tim realized, would be episcopal power, analogous everywhere because of the transnational ground-rules of the Church, but differently articulated everywhere as well, in significant ways. Another is the castle, uniform on one level as a private fortification, but, again, fitting in very differently into different societies. The north French or post-conquest English pattern, of a small fortification overlooking or else entirely separate from the peasant settlements dominated by the castle lord, is quite unlike the south Italian pattern in which the peasants themselves are put inside the fortification by the lord, and the way local lordship works has to be seen differently as a result; but so also does it in the pre-conquest English pattern, where fortified aristocratic residences (with their *burhgeat*), not so enormously different in material terms from post-conquest castles, were not recognized as being special at all, and do not seem to have crystallized local aristocratic dominance.<sup>13</sup> If we take elements of this kind and use them as *spie*, we have to have a sufficient structural understanding of each society to allow us to see how they do illuminate difference, of course. They can, nonetheless, act as valid and important guides. However hard it is to use them, trying to do so seems to me to be better than not to make the attempt.

Let us try, then, to develop these points, using two case studies, England and France — more precisely, England south of the Humber and west Francia north of the Loire, during a long tenth century of c. 875–1025. (I exclude Northumbria and Aquitaine, because they were structurally different in many ways.) There is not space to run through the contrasting history of the two kingdoms. It is enough to say that the west Frankish king (I will say ‘French’ from now on, although it is wholly anachronistic, because it is easier) in 877, at the death of Charles the Bald, was a strong, internationally active figure with a coherent political base stretching

<sup>12</sup> Chris Wickham, *Community and Clientele in Twelfth-Century Tuscany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 185–241.

<sup>13</sup> See e.g. Gabriel Fournier, *Le château dans le France médiévale* (Paris: Aubier-Montaigne 1978), and the collection of different examples in *L'incastellamento*, ed. by Miquel Barceló and Pierre Toubert (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1998). For the *burhgeat*, see *Gethyncdo*, c.2, in *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen*, ed. by F. Liebermann, 4 vols in 3 (Halle: Max Niermeyer, 1903), I, 456–58; for late Anglo-Saxon fortifications, see e.g. A. Williams, ‘A Bell-house and a Burh-geat’, in *Medieval Knighthood*, vol. IV, ed. by Christopher Harper-Bill and Ruth Harvey (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992), pp. 221–40.

to the Pyrenees and an effective local administrative infrastructure. Already by the 940s, however, his great-grandson Louis IV seems to have controlled fewer than ten royal estates and was arguably less influential than five other magnates, perhaps six, north of the Loire; by 987 the son of one of these, the Robertine Hugh Capet, was king of a new dynasty, but had himself lost control of the western half of his father's principality to the counts of Anjou and Blois, and only really dominated the Paris-Orléans strip. Historians argue about when this drastic downsizing of royal power occurred, with 877, 888, 897, 920, and 936 the most popular dates if one really wants a single date (which I do not, but 897 would be the most plausible if I did); still, its trajectory is not in dispute.<sup>14</sup> England was, by contrast, in effect invented across the same period, with Alfred, Edward the Elder, and Æthelstan stabilizing Wessex and then extending West Saxon control to the Humber and into Northumbria in the period 878–937; Æthelstan's brothers faced northern resistance but overcame it; then the kingdom proceeded as an orderly whole, notwithstanding serious succession disputes in 957–59 and 975–78, with Edgar and Æthelred II particularly forceful kings. Royal prestige unravelled during the pathetic military response to renewed Viking attack in the 1000s–1010s, but the kingdom's local infrastructure, apparently heavily influenced by the model of the Carolingians a century before (and thus presumably in place at least in part before that model collapsed in its homeland), survived and remained effective under the newly conquering Danish king Cnut after 1016.<sup>15</sup>

Why compare these two, very different, histories at all? Because they took place in regions with in other respects considerable similarities. They are of similar sizes,

<sup>14</sup> Among many, useful overviews include Karl Ferdinand Werner, *Histoire de France*, vol. I: *Les origines, avant l'an mil* (Paris: Fayard, 1984), pp. 469–561 (pp. 493–99 for 897 as a date); Rosamond McKitterick, *The Frankish Kingdoms under the Carolingians, 751–987* (London: Longman, 1983), pp. 228–339; Jean Dunbabin, *France in the Making, 843–1180* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 17–123; *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. III: *c. 900–1024*, ed. by Timothy Reuter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 372–455. Fundamental is Jan Dhondt, *Études sur la naissance des principautés territoriales en France (IX<sup>e</sup>–X<sup>e</sup> siècle)* (Brugge: de Tempel, 1948), pp. 40–78, 266–75 for royal estates.

<sup>15</sup> Among many, a useful overview is Pauline Stafford, *Unification and Conquest: A Political and Social History of England in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries* (London: Hodder Arnold, 1989). See also Ryan Lavelle, 'The Politics of Rebellion: The Ætheling Æthelwold and West Saxon Royal Succession, 899–902', in this volume. For Carolingian influence, see below, note 18; this may mean that it has to predate 900, and constitute an Alfredian innovation. Alfred's successors were close to the Ottonians, but the Carolingian model was less coherent in Germany than in England (see for example Reuter, 'Nur im Westen was Neues?').

and both of similar flattish fertile geography. They had access to similar local administrative infrastructures, dominated by shire or county assemblies with public judicial and military roles. They were each dominated by a stratum of magnates whose areas of control were sometimes called *regna*,<sup>16</sup> and who clearly believed in the usefulness of bad behaviour, as English aristocrats showed in the 970s and 1010s, and French aristocrats showed most of the time. And they had problems of royal succession. The French moved between three dynasties for a century, with particular crises in 893–97 and 921–23, and with three kings, Charles the Simple, his son, and his grandson, acceding to the throne at the age of eighteen or younger; the English had only one dynasty until 1013 (although four in the following sixty years), but faced tensions with every new king after 955 at the latest, exacerbated by the fact that *no* king between 939 and 1040 was over eighteen at his accession except for the ailing Eadred and except during the civil war period of 1013–16. The Victorians called the tenth century the age of ‘boy-kings’, after all,<sup>17</sup> and it is not very controversial that royal minorities and inexperienced adolescents are problems for royal power, particularly when two children are the pawns of rival factions, as in both the 950s and 970s. But England went from strength to strength, whereas France broke up. Why?

The first point to make is that the historiography on this topic does not help us at all. That on France never alludes to England; that on England increasingly recognizes France — or at least Francia — as a source for English practices, but very rarely compares its history (ten pages in Peter Clarke’s book on the eleventh-century aristocracy are a refreshing exception).<sup>18</sup> More serious is that each historiography regards the development of its own kingdom as normal, and indeed normative. It has been argued before that national teleologies underlie this; (northern) France’s medieval greatness lay in its creative disunity, and French historians hardly study

<sup>16</sup> For England, see e.g. *Vita Oswaldi archiepiscopi eboracensis*, in *The Historians of the Church of York and its Archbishops*, vol. 1, ed. by J. Raine, Rolls Series (London: Longman, 1879), pp. 399–475 (p. 428).

<sup>17</sup> See e.g. Charles Dickens, *A Child’s History of England* (London: Macmillan, 1929 and various editions), Chapter 4. For the problems of child kingship in the France of the 880s, see Thilo Offergeld, *Reges pueri: Das Königtum Minderjähriger im frühen Mittelalter* (Hannover: Primus, 2001), pp. 403–27.

<sup>18</sup> James Campbell, *Essays in Anglo-Saxon History* (London: Hambledon, 1986), pp. 155–70 (modified in Campbell, ‘The Late Anglo-Saxon State: A Maximum View’, *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 87 (1994), 39–65); Patrick Wormald, *The Making of English Law*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), pp. 29–92; Stafford, *Unification and Conquest*, pp. 184–87; Peter A. Clarke, *The English Nobility under Edward the Confessor* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), esp. pp. 141–52.

the period before 950 at all, leaving it to the Germans, the Belgians, and increasingly the British; England, though, was the medieval nation-state par excellence, and its origins have been the focus of passionate interest for centuries.<sup>19</sup> But, partly as a result of this, tenth-century English unity simply seems a normal feature of the period to recent English historians. It has to be explained, certainly, and the explanations offered are largely good ones — for example, conquest creating a new transregional ruling class and weakening former regional loyalties; magnate networks focussed on the royal court; or homogeneous administrative structures, including a system of legal assemblies that was used by rival landowners in preference to local war. But people do not worry at it, because it does not seem very *difficult* to explain. But, conversely, nor does the opposite development to the French (or the Belgians and Germans). A political system based on landed hierarchies appears to fit logically with Bloch's *fractionnement des pouvoirs*.<sup>20</sup> It may be that a Charlemagne or a Charles the Bald could develop a transregional aggregation of magnates around them that could sustain its own weight for a long time (sustained indeed by the sort of local assemblies the tenth-century English had); but historians assume that, at some moment of crisis, lords would suddenly have realized that their local power-base was the most important thing they had, and they would henceforth focus on that, not on kings. In the long tenth century, not short of crises of all kinds as it was, this realization would have to have come sooner or later, and indeed did so. As Karl Ferdinand Werner put it in 1984, rather complacently perhaps, this represented a “historical justice”; such lords ‘represented better “their” land, their region, in these difficult times, than kings who were more and more cut off from the living forces of the country’.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, in most parts of France the greater magnates lost ground to individual counts as well, as the Robertines did in the late 950s, and then in some counties even counts lost their powers to small-scale castle-holding *milites* in the much-discussed ‘feudal revolution’ of the early eleventh century, when the rules of politics decisively changed.<sup>22</sup> Again, this process

<sup>19</sup> See Reuter, ‘Medieval Politics’; Simon MacLean, *Kingship and Politics in the Late Ninth Century: The Reign of Charles the Fat*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, 4th series, 57 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 3–8; see further notes 1–2 above.

<sup>20</sup> Bloch, *La société féodale*, II, 249; so also Dhondt, *Études*, pp. 253–58.

<sup>21</sup> Werner, *Histoire de France*, p. 476.

<sup>22</sup> Introductions to this long debate are Jean-Pierre Poly and Éric Bournazel, *La mutation féodale, X<sup>e</sup>–XII<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1980) and Dominique Barthélemy, *La mutation de l’an mil a-t-elle eu lieu?* (Paris: Fayard, 1997). See most recently for tenth-century *milites*, Barthélemy, *Chevaliers et miracles: la violence et le sacré dans la société féodale* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2004), pp. 9–44.

does not seem very difficult to explain on the Continent, because it is what people expect to occur in the end. Only a recent historiography refuses to see its roots already in the reign of Charles the Bald; significantly, this historiography is largely British, Janet Nelson or Simon MacLean, more attuned as the British are to the stability of large-scale magnate networks.<sup>23</sup>

The existence of these two rival normalities, unity vs. disunity, imposes a choice, because it cannot be that both of these developments are the 'natural' ones. I tend to side with the French here; Bloch's landed society does seem to me to favour local loyalties above all, centrifugal tendencies, and it was not reversed in northern France by Philip Augustus without a strong fiscal system in the royal heartland, a new infrastructure, which was totally absent in 900.<sup>24</sup> The English case does seem to me harder to explain than the French one, that is to say; even though the magnate networks of the high Carolingian period, as of the Merovingians before them, did favour and legitimate a considerable royal protagonism, solid enough to last for centuries, crises could end it, and make it impossible to reconstruct on the same basis. We can only get at an explanation by looking comparatively, however.

Which elements, which *spie*, should we use to guide our comparisons, then? I should like to set aside local government, judicial assemblies, the 'county community', often stressed by recent English historiography. Actually, as a *spia*, how assembly politics articulated with local and regional society all across Latin Europe is exceptionally interesting and illuminating, and would be worth pursuing in detail, century by century.<sup>25</sup> But, while the *gemot* or *placitum* undoubtedly upheld

<sup>23</sup> Janet L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald* (London: Longman, 1992), e.g. pp. 20–40, 254–64; MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, e.g. pp. 48–80, 99–120.

<sup>24</sup> John W. Baldwin, *The Government of Philip Augustus* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), pp. 152–64, 239–48. The fiscal system in England began already in the 990s, of course, but we cannot easily see it funding anything in the state until after 1066, and most of its revenues may have gone to Denmark before 1035. See M. K. Lawson, 'The Collection of Danegeld and Heregeld in the Reigns of Aethelred II and Cnut', *English Historical Review*, 99 (1984), 721–38.

<sup>25</sup> For assemblies, the best overviews are Timothy Reuter, 'Assembly Politics in Western Europe From the Eighth Century to the Twelfth', in *The Medieval World*, ed. by Peter Linehan and Janet L. Nelson (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 433–50, and *Political Assemblies in the Earlier Middle Ages*, ed. by Paul S. Barnwell and Marco Mostert, *Studies in the Early Middle Ages*, 7 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003). For England, see e.g. Campbell, 'Late Anglo-Saxon State', fairly generally; J. Gillingham, 'Thengs and Knights in Eleventh-Century England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th series, 5 (1995), 129–53; and, for their origins, Nicholas Brooks, 'Alfredian Government: The West Saxon Inheritance', in *Alfred the Great: Papers From the Eleventh Centenary Conference*, ed. by Timothy Reuter (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), pp. 153–73.

capillary royal power in England, and allowed for the creation of a public sphere which kings could draw on and promote people from, so did it in Charles the Bald's France, without it acting as an autonomous resource for kings if their relevance faded for other reasons; in France, *placita* either ended altogether or, sometimes, were appropriated by counts and bishops as independent local power-bases. Assemblies did not, that is to say, operate as an independent causal element for political unity; the experience of tenth-century France already disproves that hypothesis. Rather, the comparators I should like to use are the patterns of royal land-grants and the commitment by aristocrats to local power. These are standard elements in Continental historiography, although they are not always interpreted correctly;<sup>26</sup> they are worth looking at briefly again.

Charles the Bald gave away a great deal of land. Jan Dhondt saw him as having caused the 'material ruin' of Carolingian power, thanks to his cessions of over seventy estates and over seven hundred tenant-houses, roughly as much as the documented west Frankish cessions of all the other Carolingians put together. Janet Nelson, however, regards this as a proof of the vitality and the attractive force of Charles's court and comments that it would seem much less extravagant if we knew the extent of his confiscations too; I am sure she is right.<sup>27</sup> Eadwig in England gave away a great deal of land, too, in his short reign, 955–59. His sixty-odd diplomata from 956 alone, all but one of them land gifts, make up around 5 per cent of all the genuine Anglo-Saxon charters from the four hundred years of their existence; no single year of Charles the Bald's reign produced as many as half that number, and most of Charles's were not actually gifts; no known ruler in fact matches that yearly total in the whole of Europe before the twelfth century, and Eadwig's documented generosity in the three years of his reign is broadly comparable to Charles's in a period ten times as long.<sup>28</sup> Eadwig has long been recognized

<sup>26</sup> For France, see the next note. For Italy, see, for Berengar I, Chris Wickham, *Early Medieval Italy* (London: Macmillan, 1981), pp. 172–77, shown not to be a correct interpretation by Barbara Rosenwein, 'The Family Politics of Berengar I King of Italy (888–924)', *Speculum*, 71 (1996), 247–89.

<sup>27</sup> Dhondt, *Études*, pp. 36–41, 264–66 (quote at p. 266); Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 258–59; see further Jane Martindale, 'The Kingdom of Aquitaine and the Dissolution of the Carolingian Fisc', *Francia*, 11 (1984), 131–91, who nuances Dhondt's methodology considerably.

<sup>28</sup> For lists, see *Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography*, ed. by P. H. Sawyer (London: Royal Historical Society, 1968), 2nd edn available online at <<http://www.trin.cam.ac.uk/chartwww/esawyer.99/esawyer2.html>> (henceforth S), nos 581–638 (626 is not a land gift). See Simon D. Keynes, *The Diplomas of King Æthelred 'the Unready', 978–1016: A Study in*

as an extreme in England, and his cessions tend, plausibly enough, to get ascribed to political insecurity; no-one has ever claimed that he caused the 'material ruin' of his house, however, and the forceful reigns of Edgar and Æthelred make it clear that he did not.

Let us develop the English side of this comparison. Eadwig has a bad press, thanks to the *Vita Dunstani* in particular, but, even by medieval standards, it is difficult to imagine all that much independent activism from a king who was fifteen at his accession and eighteen or nineteen when he died. It is surely easier to imagine that this generosity was elicited by the adult patrons who were also its beneficiaries, such as the brothers Ælfhere, Ælfheah, and Eadric, the first two of them major ealdormen, Æthelweard the later chronicler and ealdorman, and Æthelwold, then Abbot of Abingdon, most of them related to or otherwise close to Eadwig's queen Ælfgifu, as Ann Williams and Barbara Yorke have stressed. Nor are surviving diplomata likely to have exhausted royal generosity to this grouping, for Ælfheah's will disposes of perhaps six hundred hides of land in seven shires, and he owned more than that elsewhere; not all of this came from kings, but much probably did.<sup>29</sup> Eadwig's predecessors Edmund and Eadred had been dominated by a different aristocratic grouping, Æthelstan 'Half-king' and his brothers, who were close to the queen mother Eadgifu; they had certainly gained much land in their turn in the 930s–940s, although fewer gifts to them survive.<sup>30</sup> Eadwig's gifts and official appointments allowed rivals to the 'Half-king's' family to stabilize themselves, that

*their Use as Historical Evidence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 48–61, for an overview.

<sup>29</sup> *Vita S. Dunstani*, cc. 21–24, in *Memorials of St Dunstan Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. by William Stubbs, Rolls Series, 63 (London: Longman, 1874), pp. 3–52; see in general for this group A. Williams, 'Princeps Merciorum gentis', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 10 (1982), 143–72; Barbara Yorke, 'Æthelwold and the Politics of the Tenth Century', in *Bishop Æthelwold: His Career and Influence*, ed. by Barbara Yorke (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1988), pp. 65–88, at pp. 75–80; for an overview, Stafford, *Unification and Conquest*, pp. 45–50; for the role of queens, Stafford, *Queens, Concubines and Dowagers: The King's Wife in the Early Middle Ages* (London: Batsford, 1983), pp. 125–26, 148–51. Ælfheah's will is edited in *Anglo-Saxon Wills*, ed. by Dorothy Whitelock (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1930), p. 9.

<sup>30</sup> See above all Cyril R. Hart, 'Æthelstan "Half-king" and his Family', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 2 (1973), 115–44, now in Hart, *The Danelaw* (London: Hambledon, 1992), pp. 569–604. Gifts to the family include S 478, 480–81, 498, 524–25. Dunstan's family was a smaller-scale recipient of patronage in this period: N. P. Brooks, 'The Career of St Dunstan', in *St Dunstan: His Life, Times and Cult*, ed. by Nigel Ramsay, Margaret Sparks, and Tim Tatton-Brown (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992), pp. 1–23.

is to say, and we could see the two groups as, to an extent, factions. They divided regional power in England south of the Humber, and prominence in the royal court, across the next generation, although they were not by any means always systematically opposed to each other. Æthelwold was close to Dunstan, as is well known, even though their aristocratic and royal patrons were at odds (Dunstan being a protégé of Æthelstan ‘Half-king’'s family); Ælfhere of Mercia, Eadwig’s protégé, joined Edgar’s revolt in 957, which was largely backed by the ‘Half-king’'s family; and Eadwig’s affinity survived almost intact into Edgar’s reign, indicating that there was no visceral animosity between the rivals. They formed a political network around the royal court, inside which they jostled for power, rather than fighting systematically for it.<sup>31</sup>

We cannot base all our analysis of royal gift-giving in England on royal diplomata, for these are too regionally restricted, surviving as they do in the cartularies of only a handful of religious houses. But what we know of the two super-magnate families of Æthelstan ‘Half-king’ and Ælfhere of Mercia makes it clear how royal in origin their power was: they both ruled wide regions, East Anglia and Mercia, and the ‘Half-king’'s sons Æthelwold and Æthelwine continued to control East Anglia until 992; but their families were both West Saxon in origin, and their authority in the Midlands and the East was transparently the direct result of the West Saxon conquest. All of the major tenth-century magnate families, in fact, had West Saxon roots except that of Wulfric Spot in the north Midlands; similarly, all the major West Saxon families ended up as caldormen outside Wessex, except that of Æthelweard the chronicler, which stayed in the South-West. Æthelwine’s dominance of East Anglia is very clear in the *Liber Eliensis*; it must all have derived from royal gift, both of office and land, except for whatever he seized as a consequence of his local rule.<sup>32</sup>

There are two main points that come out of these observations about England. The first is that the kings could dispose of enormous amounts of land. Eadwig could give away so much in 956 without having any obvious effect on the wealth

<sup>31</sup> The coherence of this network is particularly argued by Robin Fleming, *Kings and Lords in Conquest England*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, 4th series, 15 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 22–39.

<sup>32</sup> See notes 29, 30, with *Charters of Burton Abbey*, ed. by P. H. Sawyer (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 1979), pp. xxxviii–xlvi for Wulfric Spot; the family of Æthelweard needs analysis. For the *Liber Eliensis*, ed. by E. O. Blake, Camden Third Series, 92 (London: Royal Historical Society, 1962), see e.g. II. 24, 27, 34, 55; cf. *Chronicon abbatiae Ramesiensis*, ed. by W. Dunn Macray (London: Longman, 1886), e.g. p. 72.

of his successors. All of the tenth-century magnate élite, who contained some amazingly rich figures, gained their wealth largely from royal generosity, without kings losing out in the long run. It has been argued that Edward the Confessor's property was eclipsed by that of the Godwine and Leofric families by 1065, but Stephen Baxter has shown that in reality even Edward controlled far more land than any of his magnates.<sup>33</sup> In tenth-century politics, however, more important is Æthelred II's ability to end the control of every one of the major magnate families over their ealdormanries in the two decades after 985, despite the military crisis of the period; whether or not he was wise to do this, he maintained the strength to push all of them into private life.<sup>34</sup> That strength implies that he also maintained a good deal of land, and as each family lost position in turn he doubtless gained more.

The other point is that each magnate family maintained its geographical spread. Great lords routinely had land in a dozen counties; and the major families ruled in Mercia or the East without ever abandoning their Wessex base. This was obviously, as Pauline Stafford has stressed, a product of the early tenth-century West Saxon conquest, but it continued throughout the century.<sup>35</sup> So did it after the two eleventh-century conquests, of 1016–17 and 1066, when new kings did exactly the same with their own protégés; Godwine's and Leofric's family dominances in 1065 were the opposite of regionalized. This spread inevitably favoured national, rather than regional, political ambition, south of the Humber at any rate. Magnates wanted to control the royal court, rather than just make themselves rulers of East Anglia. Hence the care with which they managed their crises; the conflicts of the 950s and 970s — and also the 1050s — were resolved without war or anything other than localized violence; factions squared up to each other knowing that they might well have to come to terms later.<sup>36</sup> The only exception to this was the series of killings of political leaders in the last decade of Æthelred's reign, and then the start of a breakdown into shire-based interests in the early 1010s;<sup>37</sup> whether this

<sup>33</sup> Stephen Baxter, *The Earls of Mercia; Lordship and Power in late Anglo-Saxon England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

<sup>34</sup> See Keynes, *Diplomas of King Æthelred*, pp. 176–213, for basic data; Stafford, *Unification and Conquest*, pp. 60–63; Fleming, *Kings and Lords*, pp. 39–52.

<sup>35</sup> Stafford, *Unification and Conquest*, pp. 38–39, 150–61.

<sup>36</sup> See D. J. V. Fisher, 'The Anti-monastic Reaction in the Reign of Edward the Martyr', *Cambridge Historical Journal*, 10 (1950–52), 254–70 for 975–78; for 1051–1052, see *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, trans. by D. Whitelock (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1961), s.aa. 1051–52 (and cf. a. 1016 for the peacemaking at the end of the civil war period).

<sup>37</sup> *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, s.aa. 1006, 1010–16.

was simply the result of the demoralization of military defeat, or the consequences of an inevitable localization of politics, given the stabilization of families a century after the West Saxon conquest, cannot be said, but, if the early 1010s were the start of a French-style political involution, it was nipped in the bud by Cnut's conquest, and the whole process could start again.

French land-grants were different. For a start, as we have seen, there were fewer of them. Conversely, however, even though Charles the Bald may not have given away the family silver, it is at least true that his successors soon controlled much less, and in two generations the Carolingians held almost nothing.<sup>38</sup> This must have also been because of local expropriations of fiscal land by counts and bishops, but we would be unwise to assume that Æthelwine and Ælfhere — and indeed Oswald, both in Ramsey and Worcester — were not doing the same. Such expropriations in France were more fatal to eventual royal authority than they were in England. I think we have to conclude that there was more royal land in England than in France: partly because of West Saxon annexations in a conquest situation, no doubt; partly for reasons I will come back to. France was only one part of the old Frankish heartland, and after 910 or so Charles the Simple responded to his exclusion from the old Merovingian-period royal lands around Paris, by now in the hands of the Robertines and the Vermandois counts, by trying to take over the Carolingian tenurial centre that was Lotharingia; but by the end of the decade he had to face competition there from Henry I of Germany, and that sealed his fate.<sup>39</sup> A major difference between England and France was, in a sense, that French royal land was finite, and there is as yet little evidence that English royal land was.

The other point about France is that grants were localized earlier. Charles the Bald could move his magnates around the country, as every English king did; none of his successors could. From the 880s at the latest, magnates tended to get royal gifts in areas they were already powerful, and not elsewhere. The great families still accumulated counties, but they were all contiguous: they formed power blocks. The Robertines, the counts of Flanders, the counts of Vermandois, the archbishops of Reims, had their core areas; they gained as much land there as they could, and little elsewhere. The king was increasingly excluded from each of these core areas, as never in England; but each of them was increasingly the focus of the main

<sup>38</sup> See in general Dhondt, *Études*; Jean-François Lemarignier, *Le gouvernement royal aux premiers temps capétiens (987–1108)* (Paris: Picard, 1965), pp. 28–35, tables III.1–2.

<sup>39</sup> Werner, *Histoire de France*, pp. 504–12; Carl-Richard Brühl, *Deutschland-Frankreich: Die Geburt zweier Völker* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1990), pp. 428–36.

interest, comital and tenurial and seigneurial, of each family.<sup>40</sup> When Rudolf of Burgundy became king in 923–36, he seldom moved out of Burgundy: kingship was by now little more than an adjunct to family power in a local area.<sup>41</sup> As the Robertines became Capetians in 987 and onwards, this became a lasting feature of royal power. Perhaps the turning point here was Charles the Simple's venture into Lotharingia; although barely 100 kilometres away from his power-base around Reims, including the old Carolingian heartlands of Liège and Aachen, it by now seemed too foreign to the west Frankish/French magnates, who even resented the role of a Lotharingian (from the lesser nobility), Hagano, as Charles's principal advisor; this was the reason or excuse why they revolted in 920, and eventually overthrew Charles, in a move that represented the final rejection of any real royal protagonism.<sup>42</sup> This regionalism had no parallel in England, simply because the magnates had lands across much wider territories, and it never would have any parallel in the future either.

I shall spend less time on my second comparator, local political practice, for it follows from the first, as we have just seen. French aristocrats developed a local politics in this period; there is no sign that English aristocrats, south of the Humber, ever did. Herbert I and II of Vermandois painstakingly pieced together the counties and the royal land of the Oise valley, and then moved eastwards to take over, for a time at least, the archbishopric of Reims and its resources.<sup>43</sup> Æthelwine

<sup>40</sup> Dhondt, *Études*, pp. 81–146 and passim; Karl Ferdinand Werner, 'Untersuchungen zur Frühzeit des französischen Fürstentums (9.–10. Jahrhundert)', *Die Welt als Geschichte*, 18 (1958), 256–89; 19 (1959), 146–93 (on p. 185, he stresses that the form of power changed in this region even though the families did not); and 20 (1960), 87–119.

<sup>41</sup> For his acts, see *Recueil des actes de Robert I<sup>er</sup> et Raoul, rois de France (922–936)*, ed. by Robert-Henri Bautier and Jean Dufour (Paris: Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres, De Boccard, 1978), nn. 3–26. Cf. Carl-Richard Brühl, *Fodrum, gistum, servitium regis* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1968), p. 231 n.

<sup>42</sup> Flodoard, *Annales / Les annales de Flodoard*, ed. by Philippe Lauer, Collection des texts pour servir à l'étude et à l'enseignement de l'histoire, 39 (Paris: Picard, 1905), s.a. 920, cf. 922; Richer, *Historiae*, ed. by Hartmut Hoffmann, MGH Scriptores, 38 (Hannover: Hahn, 2000), I. 15–16. These historians stress that Hagano was *mediocris* of birth more than that he was Lotharingian, but Brühl, *Deutschland-Frankreich*, pp. 428–29, argues that he was in reality an aristocrat, which thus foregrounds a geographical explanation.

<sup>43</sup> See Dhondt, *Études*, pp. 119–30; Werner, 'Untersuchungen', pp. 262, 87–115; Michel Bur, *La formation du comté de Champagne, v. 950–v. 1150*, Mémoires des Annales de l'Est, 54 (Nancy: Université de Nancy II, 1977), pp. 87–99; David Bates, 'West Francia: The Northern Principalities', in *New Cambridge Medieval History*, III, 398–419, who stresses the creativity and innovation of the tenth-century princes.

of East Anglia was quite different; he had a clear regional base, and threw his weight around in it as the Ely chronicler complained (though as often to Ely's advantage as to its disadvantage),<sup>44</sup> but he had too many Wessex estates to think regionally rather than nationally. And it is striking, when we look at medium aristocrats, to find that they were in much the same position. Peter Clarke notes in his study of the 1065 sections of *Domesday Book* that only one major owner in this category in the whole country, Eadric of Laxfield, had most of his land in a single area, which he could dominate (east Suffolk in his case). Others had land stretching, on average, across six shires. Beorhtric son of Ælfgar Mæw had land from Cornwall to Worcestershire, without holding any official position; the signs are that his family already held as widely in the late tenth century.<sup>45</sup> And other late tenth-century figures, more chancily documented, had similar spreads: Oswald's family, stretching from Ramsey in the Fens to Worcestershire; his affine Æthelstan Mannessune, linked to ealdorman Æthelwine and father of the first Abbot of Ramsey, owning from Lincolnshire to Norfolk; Æthelstan's probable son-in-law Ælfhelm Polga, owning from Essex to Huntingdonshire.<sup>46</sup>

Could Ælfhelm Polga, say, have turned himself into a local lord with a seigneurial territory, a *seigneurie banale*, in his core lands on the Essex-Suffolk-Cambridgeshire border? There is no sign of that in his will of the 980s, which we have, in which Ælfhelm distributes movables and estates between family, dependants, and patrons (the rival monasteries of Ely and Ramsey, and the king). He does not even give us a clue to where his principal place of residence was, where he may have had his *burhgeat* — in France, even Merovingian-period wills usually give us that.<sup>47</sup> The 980s is a period in France when every aristocrat had clearly defined power-bases, *castella*, which, however primitive their defences, were foci of rights

<sup>44</sup> *Liber Eliensis*, II. 55.

<sup>45</sup> Clarke, *English Nobility*, passim; pp. 41–42, 260–62 for Beorhtric, pp. 36–37, 59–60, 288–302 for Eadric.

<sup>46</sup> See Andrew Wareham, 'Saint Oswald's Family and Kin', and Vanessa Hill, 'St Oswald and his Tenants', both in *St Oswald of Worcester*, ed. by Nicholas Brooks and Catherine R. E. Cubitt (London: Leicester University Press, 1996), pp. 46–63, 100–16 (at pp. 108–11); for Æthelstan and Ælfhelm, see also Hart, *The Danelaw*, pp. 613–23.

<sup>47</sup> *Anglo-Saxon Wills*, n. 13. Compare for Merovingian Francia *Chartae Latinae Antiquiores*, vol. XIV: *France 2*, ed. by Hartmut Atsma and Jean Vezin (Zürich: Dietikon, 1982), n. 569 (late seventh-century) for the son of Idda, clearly based at Arthies and Chaussy in the Vexin. Clarke, *English Nobility*, pp. 150–52, relates the English situation to the lack of castles in the pre-conquest period as well.

of all kinds. Their bases were usually fairly concentrated — that the tenth- and eleventh-century counts of Anjou seem to have come from Château-Landon east of Orléans, some 250 kilometres away, and actually kept their castle there, becomes worthy of remark.<sup>48</sup> By c. 1030 at the latest, on the fringes of Angevin power in Vendôme, a document shows the incredibly complex network of seigneurial rights a lord could lay claim to, with *excubiae* in his *castellum*, *comandisia*, *carregium*, *vinagium*, *vicaria*, and others, all carefully separated out, and land rather unprominent on the list; the closest we get to a contemporary list of rights of this kind in England is the *Rectitudines singularum personarum*, which is about estate management, a very different matter.<sup>49</sup> Medium aristocrats in England, by contrast, did have judicial rights over tenants, *sac* and *soc* and variants, and this could be held over non-tenants as well, as *Domesday Book* shows, but there is no sense of it ever being used as a basis of political power, and still less any sense of judicial power being localized, territorialized.<sup>50</sup> The spread of landholding itself made that impossible. If the chaos of the early 1010s had continued, maybe lords would have had to choose a locality and defend it, including laying claim to political rights there, but it did not continue, and that was the only time that external crisis might have encouraged it.

Ælfhelm Polga and Æthelstan Mannessune did not, probably, hold wide spreads of land because of royal gift-giving; they did have royal connections, but they were not prominent enough for much royal patronage. We cannot say at all where their land did come from, whether a share-out of the Danelaw after the

<sup>48</sup> *Gesta consulum Andegavorum*, in *Chroniques des comtes d'Anjou et des seigneurs d'Amboise*, ed. by Louis Halphen and René Poupardin (Paris: Picard, 1913), pp. 25–73, at pp. 28–29, 39, 49; commentary in Werner, 'Untersuchungen', pp. 271–72.

<sup>49</sup> *Cartulaire de l'abbaye cardinale de la Trinité de Vendôme*, vol. 1, ed. by Charles Métails (Paris: Picard, 1893), n. 2; my dating here follows Olivier Guillot, *Le comte d'Anjou et son entourage au XI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, vol. 1 (Paris: Picard, 1972), pp. 49–51 n. Dominique Barthélemy, *La société dans le comté de Vendôme de l'an mil au XIV<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 1993), pp. 102–03, 301–33, the fullest commentary, argues for c. 1000, but his arguments here are not conclusive, and I am therefore playing safe. For the *Rectitudines*, see *Die Gesetze*, ed. by Liebermann, 1, 444–55.

<sup>50</sup> Clarke, *English Nobility*, pp. 130–33; D. M. Hadley, *The Northern Danelaw: Its Social Structure c.800–1100* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 2000), pp. 167–71. Patrick Wormald, 'Lordship and Justice in the Early English Kingdom', in *Property and Power in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Wendy Davies and Paul Fouracre (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 114–36, at pp. 129–30, minimizes *sac* and *soc*, but they certainly had a judicial aspect; this article demolishes earlier theories of wider (monastic) franchises, all the same.

West Saxon conquest,<sup>51</sup> or cessions by ealdormen (the 'Half-king's' family, in this case), or marriage, or acquisition. But the fact that they could own widely at all depended on a scale of politics which the conquest, and royal largesse to the magnate families, encouraged. Conquests did this; they helped wide-scale political networks everywhere. So did Charlemagne's, in Saxony and Italy (see Nelson's chapter, below). But the geographical scale of landowning that ensued, if it was maintained, itself underpinned a wide-scale national politics and undermined trends to localization. This happened in England, but not in France, and the difference is important.

Few of these individual points about France and England are new. But the comparative perspective heightens the contrasts and makes, in my view at least, some of the different developments in each kingdom easier to see, perhaps even to explain; and it removes some of the teleologies historians are prone to, in that it makes alternative routes easier to identify. England remains the exception, but maybe the exception that proves the rule. Comparison points to the scale of English royal landowning and the geographical spread of aristocratic landowning as both unusual, with three conquests in 150 years further lessening what might be seen as a 'normal' tendency to move to regional politics. Actually, what really strikes me about England in the tenth century is the sense of an oligarchy, a community of magnates and queens (and sometimes also kings) devoted to dividing the spoils of conquest; Edgar for me hardly rises above the surface of that oligarchy (one could discuss that), and only Æthelred II managed to break it down, to his ultimate disadvantage. For all the protagonism of Alfred and Edward the Elder around 900, my sense is that that oligarchy is older, too. I would see it deriving from the mutual interest kings and aristocrats had in the ninth century to turn their traditional superiority (as Frederic Maitland called it) over large tribal territories, the building-blocks of the early Anglo-Saxon period and even of the Mercian supremacy, into the real control over and exploitation of dependants which landowning brings.<sup>52</sup> That crystallization of landowning power was also the reason for the extraordinarily extensive properties ninth- and tenth-century English kings disposed of, even in the Wessex heartland they had not had to conquer. The

<sup>51</sup> It could not be earlier, for the independent Danelaw was too politically fragmented for wide ownership to be easy.

<sup>52</sup> See F. W. Maitland, *Domesday Book and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1897), pp. 272–90, 374–97; Rosamond Faith, *The English Peasantry and the Growth of Lordship* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1997), pp. 1–177; Chris Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean, 400–800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 314–26, 347–51.

English kings, by this unusual route, became arguably the richest in landed resources in Latin Europe by the early tenth century; the West Saxon magnates were their eager accomplices as they achieved this control and extended outwards into the Danelaw and beyond. These may be the core elements in English 'exceptionalism'. But they would require much more analysis — necessarily comparative, of course — to set out. As Tim Reuter knew, the final problem about comparison is that, once you start it, it is so hard to stop.

## CHARLEMAGNE AND THE PARADOXES OF POWER

Janet L. Nelson

It's a great honour to have been asked to give this second lecture in Tim Reuter's memory. It's also a pleasure — a rather bittersweet one, because his death is too recent not to hurt — but very positively a pleasure because of a chance to say more about Tim's work and the debt medievalists owe to it. First and foremost I want to say how glad I am that Georgie and Natalie are here with us. For the love and support of Tim's family were indispensable to the producing of the work we are celebrating this evening. In the preface to *Germany in the Early Middle Ages* (1991), Tim acknowledged, in proper style, his largest debt *last*: 'to Georgie, Fenton and Natalie who put up [with the long periods of the book's writing] patiently but firmly'.<sup>1</sup> I think everyone in this audience, scholars or kin to scholars, will recognize a little paradox there. Paradoxes, of course, only seem to be contradictions until you think a bit more about them.

It is also a pleasure to return to the University of Southampton, which had the wisdom to give Tim a Chair in medieval history thus maintaining a great tradition here. The Reuter Lecture is one powerful sign that the University will continue its commitment to the subject Tim professed. All of you in this audience will read and rejoice in, as further signs and embodiments of the tradition's continuance (medieval historians are good at sign-reading), the presence here this evening of Colin Morris and Anne Curry.

Tim began his scholarly career as a student of twelfth-century Germany — the period German scholars call the *Hochmittelalter* — the High Middle Ages, as dis-

Given as the Reuter Lecture, 2005, published Southampton, 2006. The present text differs only in having one or two updated references in the footnotes.

<sup>1</sup> Timothy Reuter, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages c. 800–1056* (London: Longman, 1991), Preface, p. xii.

tinct from the early part. It was Karl Leyser (I quote Tim) 'who introduced me to the strange world of medieval Germany'.<sup>2</sup> Tim took on board Karl's anthropological approach: distance balanced by something as close as possible to participant-observation. He also learned much from Karl about the value of comparison, carefully controlled.<sup>3</sup> But it was Tim's own choice to move to Germany, and subject himself to the culture-shock of another national tradition of scholarship. It was all very worthwhile, in all kinds of ways, but not least because Tim found his own scholarly position and voice — which was English, not German — and acquired a quite exceptional knowledge of and sympathy for German history and historians. As Tim put it, with typical self-deprecating humour but with careful nuance: 'my vulgar English pragmatism has prevented me from believing too strongly in some of the more ethereal constructions of German medieval scholarship'.<sup>4</sup> Not believing too strongly is very far from scepticism. Tim found a place in his writings for the pragmatic *and* the ethereal.

What did occur, I think, during Tim's very productive years at Munich was a strengthening of his interest in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries: a period particularly cultivated, and with exceptional distinction, by German medievalists. It was no coincidence that it was in the late 1980s that Tim was signed up to edit the tenth-century volume of the *New Cambridge Medieval History*;<sup>5</sup> nor that, when he was invited to speak at big conferences in the early 1990s, he chose largely tenth-, eleventh-, and twelfth-century topics. Yet he always resisted the period divides within medieval history, especially in the variant form practised in England where Anglo-Saxonists and post-Conquest specialists tend to belong to different tribes, just as he patiently but firmly rejected excesses of national isolationism or exceptionalism, as any historian of Europe must.<sup>6</sup> Long before the whole concept got debased by being falsely promised, Tim's earliest publications were all about

<sup>2</sup> Reuter, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages*, Preface, p. xii.

<sup>3</sup> See Tim on 'Karl Leyser the Historian', in Karl Leyser, *Communications and Power in Medieval Europe*, ed. by Timothy Reuter, 2 vols (London: Hambledon, 1995), II: *The Gregorian Revolution and Beyond*, pp. ix–xvi (pp. xi–xii); and for Tim's own work, see the insightful remarks of Chris Wickham, 'Problems in Doing Comparative History', in this volume, pp. 5–28, *passim*.

<sup>4</sup> Reuter, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages*, Preface, p. x.

<sup>5</sup> This was published as *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. III: *c. 900–1024* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

<sup>6</sup> See Tim's Inaugural Lecture in this University, printed in his collected papers, *Medieval Politics and Modern Mentalities*, ed. by Janet L. Nelson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), Chapter 1.

*joined-up thinking*. Take his edited collection of translated papers, *The Medieval Nobility* (1978), subtitled *Studies on the Ruling Classes of France and Germany from the Sixth to the Twelfth Century* (Tim was always comfortable with the concept of class). Tim's short introductory critical survey of the preceding thirty-years' worth of historiography is a gem in itself.<sup>7</sup> The papers included Karl-Ferdinand Werner's path-breaking but formidable 'Important Noble Families in the Kingdom of Charlemagne' (it's not only undergraduate students who give heartfelt thanks for Tim's neat translation), which showed the interdependence of Frankish monarchy and Frankish aristocracy across a time-span that stretched from the seventh century to well on in the ninth, and as Tim pointed out, offered 'a valuable corrective to the ideas — still too often found as explicit statement in textbooks and as unconscious assumption in articles and monographs — that the relationship between the nobility and the king was necessarily hostile, and that the king had a monopoly of creative political activity'.<sup>8</sup> 'Still too often found' in 1978; still too often found, alas, both as statement and assumption, in 2005. Or take *The Greatest Englishman* (1980), a collection of papers on St Boniface whom many Germans rank as one of *their* greatest: the title wasn't Tim's choice, I believe, but the choice of a subject — Boniface — whose career was spent straddling the divide between England and the Continent was very dear to Tim's heart. Tim's own contribution to that collection was a stunning paper on 'St Boniface and Europe': a piece of joined-up judgement on Church and churches in the period immediately before Charlemagne, that can only be described in both current and traditional senses as cool.<sup>9</sup>

The Carolingians already cropped up in Tim's work in the 1970s, then. Charlemagne's reign became central in two papers Tim delivered in the mid-80s (on 13 April 1984 and 26 March 1986: I keep my old diaries). 'Plunder and tribute in the Carolingian Empire', read to the Royal Historical Society in London, was a special occasion for Tim not least because he'd invited his parents to hear him lecture for the first and perhaps only time, and he was very anxious that they should

<sup>7</sup> *The Medieval Nobility: Studies on the Ruling Classes of France and Germany from the Sixth to the Twelfth Century* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1978), pp. 1–16.

<sup>8</sup> *Medieval Nobility*, pp. 2–3.

<sup>9</sup> Timothy Reuter, 'St Boniface and Europe', in *The Greatest Englishman: Essays on St Boniface and the Church at Crediton*, ed. by Timothy Reuter (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1980), pp. 69–94. Cf. Tim's further reflections on "Kirchenreform" und "Kirchenpolitik" im Zeitalter Karls Martells: Begriffe und Wirklichkeit', in *Karl Martell in seiner Zeit*, ed. by Jörg Jarnut, Ulrich Nonn, and Michael Richter, Beihefte der Francia, 37 (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1994), pp. 35–59.

enjoy it (which they did).<sup>10</sup> The entire audience knew as they listened that the earlier medieval scene would never be the same again. Twenty years after its publication in the *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 'Plunder and Tribute' would I think attract more hits than any other medieval European paper if that august series were online. 'Plunder and Tribute' takes me directly to the power and paradoxes I want to talk about this evening. Briefly, what Tim did was to issue a wake-up call to earlier medievalists to register the dependence of state power on controlled violence and the profits accruing from it (this was an application of Max Weber), and to trace out (as Weber never did) the political implications in the particular context of what some people still call the Dark Ages, the period when those good old Anglo-Saxon words *gift* and *theft* say much of what needs to be said about social and economic relations.<sup>11</sup> It was not just *Treue*, loyalty, beloved of German historians from the nineteenth century onwards, that kept the warriors in the royal following true to their lord: royal lordship, like anyone else's, also meant the constant provision of kindness (*benignitas*), care (*sollicitudo*), and comfort (*consolatio*), in the form of frequent gifts of food and drink, clothing, gold and silver, horses, weapons, and adornment. The gift of those items, according to the author of the ninth-century treatise *The Government of the Palace*, generated in every man 'a spirit that burned more ardently for royal service' (*ad regale obsequium inflammatus animus ardentius*).<sup>12</sup> Note the author's choice of concepts for the incentives: *benignitas*, *sollicitudo*, *consolatio*. Then note the material forms these took. If you sense a paradox, think again — and think specifically about what it must have been like to be in the entourage of Charlemagne.

For Tim's analysis can be targeted even more precisely than he thought, if you accept a case that I've argued recently for *The Government of the Palace* as very largely the work of Charlemagne's cousin Adalard, writing late in Charlemagne's

<sup>10</sup> Timothy Reuter, 'Plunder and Tribute in the Carolingian Empire', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th series, 35 (1985), 75–94; repr. in *Medieval Politics*, ed. by Nelson, Chapter 13.

<sup>11</sup> For gift and theft in this context, see Philip Grierson, 'Commerce in the Dark Ages: A Critique of the Evidence', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th series, 9 (1959), 123–40. For the continuing usefulness of Max Weber's views on the state, see Susan Reynolds, 'The Historiography of the Medieval State', in *Companion to Historiography*, ed. by Michael Bentley (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 117–38.

<sup>12</sup> *Hincmarus De ordine palatii*, ed. by Thomas Gross and Rudolf Schieffer, MGH Fontes Iuris Germanici Antiqui, 3 (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1980), cap. V (cap. 27), p. 80, lines 438–46.

reign, and thus reflecting the practice of Charlemagne's court (and the courts of his sons, the sub-kings of Italy and Aquitaine).<sup>13</sup> So what Tim called 'Hincmar's view' may indeed have been shared by Archbishop Hincmar of Rheims, who produced a supplemented version of the text in 882, but it was a view formed two generations before 882 and based on the experience of one of Charlemagne's closest advisers. The Carolingian ruler's giving out of such good things, Tim thought, depended on an inflow from the profits of warfare, and especially tribute payments from subject peoples. The workings of these laws of demand and supply fit particularly well, I'd add, in the reign of Charlemagne, and especially its latter years: much better, in fact, than in the 830s or the 880s. A quick fix of treasure from the Saxons' shrine (call that *theft*) gave Charlemagne the wherewithal (call that *gift*) to begin his sole reign by igniting a lot of Frankish spirits so that they burned ardently. In 774, treasure brought from conquered Italy to Francia gave Charlemagne a further infusion of wherewithal. Most of all, in 796, the Avar hoard captured in Pannonia, and brought all the way to Aachen in cartloads,<sup>14</sup> according to Charlemagne's biographer 'made the Franks look as if they'd been poor before', so rich did they now become. The biographer admitted that this was theft, but justified it on the grounds that though the Avars had had their treasure for a very long time, it all *originated* in theft as well.<sup>15</sup> Nice one! Charlemagne redistributed the loot 'with liberal hand' to holy places, to high-ups ecclesiastical and lay (some of it must

<sup>13</sup> Janet L. Nelson, 'Aachen as a Place of Power', in *Topographies of Power in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. by Mayke de Jong and Frans Theuvs (Leiden: Brill, 2001), pp. 217–41.

<sup>14</sup> 'Fifteen carts, each pulled by four oxen, filled with the gold, silver and silks' arrived at Aachen: *Annales Northumbriani*, s.a. 796, ed. by R. Pauli, MGH Scriptores, 13 (Hannover: Hahn, 1881), p. 55, and incorporated in Symeon of Durham, *Omnia opera*, ed. by Thomas Arnold, 2 vols, Rolls Series, 75 (London: Longman, 1882–85), II, 2–283 (p. 56), trans. by Dorothy Whitelock, *English Historical Documents*, vol. I, 2nd rev. edn (London: Routledge, 1979), p. 273. See now Joanna Story, 'The Frankish Annals of Lindisfarne and Kent', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 34 (2005), 59–109.

<sup>15</sup> Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni*, 6th edn, c. 13, ed. by O. Holder-Egger, MGH Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum sep. ed., 25 (Hannover: Hahn, 1911), p. 16: 'Omnis pecunia et congesti ex longo tempore thesauri direpti sunt [...] Quippe cum usque in id temporis poene pauperes viderentur, tantum auri et argenti in regia repertum, tot spolia pretiosa in proeliis sublata, ut merito credi possit hoc Francos Hunis iuste eripuisse, quod Huni prius aliis gentibus iniuste eripuerunt' ('All the movable wealth and the treasures crammed there over such a long time were scattered [...] Indeed it seemed as if [the Franks] had almost been poor men up to that time, they found so much gold and silver in the [Avar] palace and captured so much precious loot in their campaigns, so that it could be believed that the Franks had stolen justly from the Avars what the Avars had stolen unjustly from other peoples'). This was a Frankish version of restorative justice.

actually have come *this* way, via Hamwih/Southampton, en route to King Offa of Mercia),<sup>16</sup> and last but very much not least to the *aulici*, ‘the men of the hall’, and ‘the others doing service in his palace’ (*in palatio suo militantes*).<sup>17</sup> From then on, the supply side was effectively taken care of, topped up by further tributes and by lavish diplomatic gifts from Constantinople and Baghdad.

On the demand side, Tim again spotted a key piece of evidence, but because his gaze was wider didn’t especially emphasize the latter years of Charlemagne’s reign. A fragment of a capitulary (that’s a bit of administrative law) prohibits ‘trading (*negotium*) by night in gold and silver vessels, slaves, jewels, horses and livestock’, and then requires all such transactions to take place ‘in the daytime before all and before witnesses’.<sup>18</sup> For Tim, and his judgement was cool as ever, this was the tip of an iceberg: evidence for ‘a very large-scale circulation of goods’ fuelled by tribute payments (and plunder?), a kind of *parallel* economy to the normal one.<sup>19</sup> The currency was the wherewithal of noble gifts, that is, gifts denoting social rank, gifts suitable for nobles, gifts whose reception made you feel nobler. Drawing out a bit what Tim said rather elliptically, I’d say that the *negotiatores* or businessmen, like those mentioned by Charlemagne in his letter to King Offa of Mercia accompanying the gifts of 796, were not warriors moonlighting on their own account, but professional traders, middlemen acting between the lords and the men who both kept the market supplied and were also the main buyers. Tim’s second inference was that this parallel market wasn’t allowed to become a black market but was ‘largely, if not exclusively, controlled by the king’.<sup>20</sup> Other capitularies especially in 805 and 806 are concerned with stopping theft and settling conflicts before they escalated into feuds: both crime and conflict were likely to arise in the parallel economy, and

<sup>16</sup> See Charlemagne’s letter to Offa in *Epistolae Karolini Aevi*, vol. II, ed. by Ernest Dümmler, MGH Epistolae, 4 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1895), no. 100, pp. 144–46 (p. 146): ‘Vestrae quoque dilectioni [...] dirigere studuimus unum balteum et unum gladium Huniscum et duo pallia sirica’ (‘To your Belovedness, we have taken trouble to send a sword-belt and an Avar sword and two silk palls’).

<sup>17</sup> *Annales regni Francorum*, s.a. 796, ed. by Frederick Kurze, MGH Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum sep. ed., 6 (Hannover: Hahn, 1895), p. 99.

<sup>18</sup> *MGH Capitularia regum Francorum*, ed. by Alfred Boretius (Hannover: Hahn, 1883), (hereafter *Capit.*) I, no. 55, c. 2, p. 142: ‘De negotio super omnia praecipendum est, ut nullus audeat in nocte negotiare in vasa aurea et argentea, mancipia, gemmas, caballos, animalia, excepto vivanda et fodro quod iter agentibus necessaria sunt, sed in die coram omnibus et coram testibus unusquisque suum negotium exercent.’

<sup>19</sup> Reuter, ‘Plunder and Tribute’, p. 85.

<sup>20</sup> Reuter, ‘Plunder and Tribute’, p. 85.

daylight transactions were a help to policing. I suspect there's a quite specific link between Tim's capitulary fragment and the Capitulary of Thionville (late 805), c. 7: 'de negotiatoribus qui partibus Sclavorum et Avarorum pergunt' ('about traders who go into the lands of the Slavs and the Avars'), and 'up to where they must go with their merchandise: in Saxon lands, as far as Bardowic, where Hredi is in charge; then, Schesel where Madalgaud is in charge; then Magdeburg where Aito is in charge; then Erfurt, where Madalgaud is in charge; Halzstadt where it's Madalgaud again; then Forchheim, Bamberg, and Regensburg, where Audulf is in charge; and Lorch, where Warner is in charge'.<sup>21</sup> Traders are to sell 'no weapons or body-armour to people outside the realm', and anyone who does this will lose all his merchandise, half of it being confiscated by the palace, the other half going to those named as 'in charge' and, presumably, their subordinates or clients ('whoever discovers the offence'). The immediately preceding clauses of the same capitulary appear to relate to the participants in these frontier markets. 'Bearing weapons within the country (*infra patriam*) is prohibited' (c. 21): a specific reason for this ban is that weapons are used in feuds and those involved in feuds (*faidosi*) are to accept settlement by conciliation — the implication is through local law-men, those named as 'in charge' on the spot.

Who was in control, then? Tim was surely right that Charlemagne wished to be; but the fact was that he could only work through those 'in charge' at the frontier posts. Three of them are clearly documented elsewhere. Audulf, a Frank married to a Bavarian, was a former royal steward who after 799 became in effect governor of Bavaria.<sup>22</sup> Warner, another Frank given office in Bavaria, and based further east, seems to have been Audulf's associate.<sup>23</sup> Madalgaud was apparently a West Frank, who performed well enough as Count of Rouen and then in 802 as

<sup>21</sup> *Capit.* I, no. 44, c. 7, p. 123.

<sup>22</sup> Audulf (Ottulf) was very probably a Frank from the Middle Rhine area: see C. Hammer, *Charlemagne's Months and their Bavarian Labours: The Politics of the Seasons in the Carolingian Empire*, British Archaeological Reports, International Series, 676 (Oxford: Archaeopress, 1997), pp. 33–43; Janet L. Nelson, 'Was Charlemagne's Court a Courtly Society?', in *Court Culture in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. by Catherine Cubitt, Studies in the Early Middle Ages, 3 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), pp. 39–58 (pp. 43, 52); and Stuart Airlie, 'Charlemagne and the Aristocracy: Captains and Kings', in *Charlemagne: Empire and Society*, ed. by Joanna Story (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), pp. 90–102 (pp. 92–93).

<sup>23</sup> Like Audulf, Werner probably hailed from the Middle Rhine: M. Mitterauer, *Karolingische Markgrafen im Südosten: Fränkische Reichsaristokratie und bayerischer Stammesadel im österreichischen Raum*, Archiv für österreichische Geschichte, 123 (Vienna: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1963), p. 65.

royal commissioner (*missus*) for the whole of Neustria (the area that became Normandy) to merit the job of frontier warden in Saxony, Thuringia, and northern Bavaria three years later.<sup>24</sup> Such a posting was potentially lucrative, if getting up to half of confiscated merchandise is anything to go by. Rouen was a frontier post in its own right, and experience there may well have been what qualified Madalgaud for guarding the guards on the eastern front: a great leap forward for him, and for Charlemagne a neat instrument of divide and rule. Here as elsewhere in the Carolingian world, 'control' in practice meant power-sharing. The idea that capitularies reflect 'a new hierarchical relationship directly linking local communities and the king' is too one-way, and too tidy.<sup>25</sup> If I were trying to offer you a visual display of Charlemagne's regime, it wouldn't be a pyramid but an organogram (I learned that word from someone in Admin.) so, with a centre, and lots of bits around it linked both with it and with each other. If we needed proof of Tim's claims that relations between nobles and king could be mutually beneficial, and that kings had no monopoly on creative political activity, the careers of Audulf and Madalgaud supply it.

Paradoxes are by definition things that seem: hence paradoxes exist in the eye of the beholder. Ninth-century beholders certainly had strong notions of hierarchy in their heads, and might, in some contexts, have envisaged government that way; but when it came to social practice, they thought laterally as well as vertically, and they were natural networkers. No ninth-century beholder would have seen any contradiction between Carolingian monarchy at its most assertive and Carolingian negotiation, subsidiarity, and partnership. For ninth-century beholders, who included Charlemagne, the important thing about tribute and gifts was their potential for recycling and oiling the wheels. Tim coined the phrase 'institutionalized plunder'

<sup>24</sup> Madalgaud is generally identified with the Count 'Madelgaud' of Rouen or possibly of Beauvais, *missus* in the Rouennais and Neustria along with Archbishop Magenard of Rouen in *Capit.* no. 34 (802), p. 100, associating him with Count Stephen of Paris, the man behind the exceptionally rich capitulary collection in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 4995: Régine Le Jan-Hennebicque, '*Prosopographica neustica*: les agents du roi en Neustrie de 639 à 840', no. 204, in *La Neustrie*, ed. by Hartmut Atsma, 2 vols (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1989), I, 231–69 (p. 258); Hubert Mordek, *Studien zur fränkischen Herrschergesetzgebung: Aufsätze über Kapitularien und Kapitulariensammlungen, ausgewählt zum 60. Geburtstag* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2000), p. 17.

<sup>25</sup> Matthew Innes, 'Charlemagne's Government', in *Charlemagne*, ed. by Story, pp. 71–89 (p. 82).

for this system:<sup>26</sup> it produced and reproduced the payments and counterpayments that held sustainable social relations in place, and to the Franks (including Charlemagne) it was part of what they called justice, that is, it was legit. (Modern Russians call their form of it *kleptocracy* — a sure sign that it's not working well there.) Charlemagne's system did work well, anyway as well as could be expected. It produced what St Augustine coolly called 'peace of a kind': that was in *The City of God*, the one book named by Charlemagne's biographer as having been among the Emperor's favourite listening while he ate his roast beef and drank his wine in moderation ('he was so moderate he seldom drank more than three cups of it during a meal').<sup>27</sup>

I've been wondering for years whether Charlemagne really did understand Augustine's point about the flawed nature of all human peace. I've come to the conclusion that he did, and that that understanding excluded any facile expectations of what could be achieved on earth. Charlemagne expected social relations to be complicated and tense. In 811 Charlemagne issued a demand for information on 'Reasons men habitually give for not doing the army-service they owe'. Responses rolled in. The adviser that summarized them began: 'First of all, they disagree' ('In primis discordantes sunt').<sup>28</sup> The answers were indeed deafeningly discordant — though some modern historians (naturally not including Tim) have either missed the political resonance of this diversity or suggested that Charlemagne's response to the responses might have been despair. I don't think the cacophony would have surprised Charlemagne in the least, for he himself not only knew its causes but had amplified them. To summarize the summary, the first set of reasons were given by the *pauperes*, less powerful free land-holders: they said that the counts, Charlemagne's main local agents, and their deputies, and also great churchmen, bishops and abbots, and their deputies, were using their power — which was partly social power but also public power delegated to them by the Charlemagne — to oppress the less powerful and free land-holders (*pauperes, pagenses*) by forcing sale of their property to them, that is, to the counts *et al.*<sup>29</sup> It doesn't take rocket science or even political science (Proudhon for instance) to see this as class politics. The next set

<sup>26</sup> Reuter, 'Plunder and Tribute', p. 87.

<sup>27</sup> Augustine, *The City of God*, XV, 4; XIX, 12: Aurelius Augustinus, *De Civitate Dei*, ed. by B. Dombart and A. Kalb (Turnhout: Brepols, 1955); English translation Augustine of Hippo, *City of God*, trans. by Henry Bettenson (London: Penguin, 2003); cf. Einhard, *Vita Karoli*, c. 24, p. 29.

<sup>28</sup> *Capit.* I, no. 73, p. 164: 'De causis propter quas homines exercitalem oboedientiam dimittere solent.'

<sup>29</sup> *Capit.* I, no. 73, cc. 2–5, p. 165.

of responses came from counts: they said that the people in their counties were disobedient, and specifically that they were ‘increasingly not obeying the count, but instead running to the *missi*’.<sup>30</sup> Now the *missi* were commissioners specially appointed by Charlemagne to supervise and monitor complaints about counts (that had been Madalgaud’s job in Neustria in 802). And we know from the *missi* themselves that they were wise to what counts got up to. Counts would put on a show of compliance when *missi* came to inspect, but as soon as the *missi* had gone away again they’d be back to their old tricks, oppressing the locals, sorting out legal cases (‘justice’) with their own cronies.<sup>31</sup> So when the questionnaires came back to the palace saying that the people in the counties were increasingly disobeying the counts and running to the *missi*, that was just what Charlemagne had foreseen, planned for, and was surely very happy indeed to hear. Naturally if you only quote the first bit, about disobedience to counts, you will present a rather different, rather gloomy, view. If you quote the whole sentence, you see that it reports the effectiveness of Charlemagne’s response to class politics in a patrimonial state. Create an inspectorate. Expect difficulties and a lot of complaints. Eventually reckon that your local representatives will get the message that you’re serious. As policy this is clear-sighted, consistent, and thoroughly realistic. Paradox is a kind of illusion; and Charlemagne didn’t fall for illusions. He was, though, a bit short of time. He was sixty-three.

What led me to these reflections was re-reading ‘Plunder and Tribute’. That paper has had huge importance for historians’ understanding of how the regime of

<sup>30</sup> *Capit.* I, no. 73, c. 6, and esp. c. 9, p. 165: ‘Quod super omnia maius fiunt inobedientes ipsi pagenses comiti et missos decurrentes, quam antea fuissent’ (‘Above all, that those men in the counties are becoming more disobedient to the count and running to the *missi*, compared with how they were before’). It is worth noting that this clause was used both by Heinrich Fichtenau, *The Carolingian Empire* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1968), p. 181, and François Louis Ganshof, *The Carolingians and the Frankish Monarchy* (London: Longman, 1971), p. 248, n. 49, and again p. 259, n. 11, as the keystone of an argument that, in Ganshof’s words, ‘men had ceased to obey Charlemagne’.

<sup>31</sup> *Capit.* I, no. 85, pp. 183–84, esp. c. 5: (*Missi* to counts) ‘Deinde observate etiam valde, ne aut vos ipsi aut aliquis, quantum vos praevidere potestis, in vestro ministerio in hoc malo ingenio deprehensus fiat, ut dicatis: “tacete, donec illi missi transeant, et postea faciamus nobis invicem iustitias!” et per illam occasionem ipsae iustitiae aut remaneant aut certe tarde fiant; sed magis certate, ut ante factae fiant quam nos veniamus ad vos’ (‘Be very careful that neither you yourselves, nor anyone in your area of office (so far as you can avoid this) should be caught in such wicked deceit that you say, “Just shut up until those *missi* have gone by, and after that let’s make the legal decisions amongst ourselves!” and as a result those cases remain undealt-with or are decided belatedly; instead, do all you can to settle these cases before we come to you’).

Charlemagne worked. It has featured in a thousand academic footnotes. It has become the mantra of a thousand undergraduate essays. But I think there has been a downside, a risk of *mis*understanding, especially in the undergraduate context. What Tim said was that tribute (and its light-fingered form, plunder) was the gilt-edged income of the Franks *through warfare*. He didn't say that that was the Franks' only source of wealth, or the only social and political currency. For the other less shiny, but in my view much more reliable and regular, bread-and-butter form of income, we must look to what was acquired through peace of a kind, that is, through social order and control, namely the products of land-lordship: rents in cash or kind, and labour-services. All that glisters is not gold. Buttered bread has a shine of its own. And the Frankish ruling class, including Charlemagne himself, knew which side their bread was buttered on. That was why plundering and conquering always coexisted with the exploitation of lordship over the lands back home within the *patria* (you left your wife to get on with it when necessary), why conquest meant extensions of lordship, and why lands came to be better and better exploited as Charlemagne's reign wore on.

Charlemagne's capitulary *De Villis, On Estates*, that is, royal estates, dates from approximately the same time as the regulations of frontier trade.<sup>32</sup> Edward Gibbon in his deeply patronizing pages on Charlemagne mocked a ruler who was interested in 'the care of his poultry and even the sale of his eggs'.<sup>33</sup> But read *On Estates* with the eyes of an agricultural economist and you will realize that Charlemagne knew how many beans make five: he wanted to be sure his bailiffs collected each year 'the full amount of chickens and eggs that the serfs and tenant-farmers owe; and when the bailiffs cannot make use of these [i.e. if there were surpluses, due for instance to an estate's not being visited by the king or by one of his agents], they are to sell them'.<sup>34</sup> *On Estates* contains several explicit references to sales and markets.<sup>35</sup> Gibbon (knowing actually rather little about the capitularies) despised Charlemagne's 'occasional and minute edicts'.<sup>36</sup> In Gibbon's book, Charlemagne could

<sup>32</sup> *Capit.* I, no. 32, pp. 82–91 (hereafter *De Villis*). For the date and broader context of *De Villis*, see now Chris Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean, 400–800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 267, 289–90, 801–05.

<sup>33</sup> Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ed. by J. B. Bury, 7 vols, 2nd edn (London: Methuen, 1909–14), v, 285.

<sup>34</sup> *De Villis*, c. 39, p. 86.

<sup>35</sup> *De Villis*, cc. 8, 31, 33, 39, 54, 62, 65 explicitly mention sales or markets (*mercata*).

<sup>36</sup> Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, v, 285. See further Rosamond McKitterick, 'Gibbon and the Early Middle Ages in Eighteenth-Century Europe', in *Edward Gibbon and Empire*, ed. by Rosamond

never qualify as a great legislator. Gibbon saw a contradiction between concern for *minutiae* and the *magnanimitas*, large-mindedness, that Charlemagne's biographer praised. The seeming contradiction, like other paradoxes, was in the eye of the beholder. It was, in this case, Gibbon's problem. For Charlemagne expressed a very clear appreciation of the value of his estates to his regime as a whole (for instance in supplying the army).<sup>37</sup> He also expressed (and implicitly advocated) plenty of landlordly concern for the well-being, including the religious well-being, of the men on his estates: the rights of a *servus* were to be protected, stewards were not to obstruct justified complaints of their subordinates from reaching Charlemagne's ears, and in ritualized penalties imitating those of their social superiors, stewards' deputies who failed to perform their duties were to come to the palace 'on foot and fasting', to render account for their failings and take their punishment.<sup>38</sup>

Join this up with thinking about counts expropriating local land-holders: Charlemagne recognized the conflicting class interests of lords and peasants. But at the same time as putting in place public agencies (*missi* and circuits) to demand service from and, up to a point, control of other front-line public agents (counts), Charlemagne's religious reforms were trying as we might say nowadays to change the culture inhabited by counts and *missi* as landlords, and of landlords in general as well. That was an ambitious programme, seriously joined-up. It was the programme that Charlemagne embarked on in the latter years of his reign, when Aachen became the hub of the empire, the magnetic centre towards which multitudes were drawn.<sup>39</sup>

Let's as the French say go back a little in order to jump forward better. I want now to look at 'Plunder and Tribute' from another perspective, which was equally Tim's other perspective. Too many historians, Tim said, had looked at warfare in terms of *obligation* to perform military service. Instead, 'Plunder and Tribute' suggested an alternative focus, on *incentive*.<sup>40</sup> To ask, what did men fight for, a topic on which there's some documentation, was a way of getting at who fought, which is something the sources very often leave unclear. Tim's answer was this: men

McKitterick and Roland E. Quinault (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 162–89 (pp. 167–68).

<sup>37</sup> *De Villis*, cc. 30, 64 explicitly refer to the army's needs; cf. c. 12's concern to prevent hostages kept at royal estates from being 'commended' by stewards to other lords.

<sup>38</sup> *De Villis*, cc. 29 (the *iustitia* of a *servus* must be pursued), 57 (complaints about *magistri* and *iudices* must be heard), 16 (disciplining negligent stewards and their subordinates).

<sup>39</sup> Nelson, 'Aachen as a Place of Power'.

<sup>40</sup> Reuter, 'Plunder and Tribute', p. 87.

engaged in warfare because it was an honourable, noble activity and way of life. Participation was prestigious, and it was also costly. The small landholder could not participate in plunder raids, and could not benefit; and in border-areas, often near mountains and woodlands, such people were in the front line when it came to reprisal raids. War making and warrior values were things Frankish nobles shared with other elites: Franks, Bretons, Slavs, or Danes understood each other, sometimes allied with each other, and behaved in similar ways. Hence one of Tim's most memorable epigrams: 'we have heard much about the destructive effects of the Vikings on Frankish society in the ninth century: we forget that for most of Europe in the eighth and ninth century, it was the Franks who were the Vikings'.<sup>41</sup> Persistent aggression was a feature of Charlemagne's regime until its latter phase: the phase labelled in so much of the modern historiography as one of failure, the Aachen years. Why did war give way to peace of a kind? And did that peace bring the onset of decomposition (a word that for me has always carried an unpleasant whiff)?<sup>42</sup> If so, how can we explain the coincidence of the years of empire, the first great flowering of Carolingian culture, and the twilight years of decline? Perhaps here we have a genuine contradiction. The great warlord, after a lifetime of successful campaigning, was no longer capable of firing up the spirits of his warriors. In fact I think this is another paradox: in other words, the contradiction can be resolved.

I will resolve it in two stages, by revisiting in Tim's footsteps the last years of Charlemagne. First I want to highlight the second of Tim's two Carolingian articles of the mid-1980s, which Tim conceived as complementing 'Plunder and Tribute'. Reading them as a pair is right, then. 'The End of Carolingian Military Expansion' was read at a conference on 'Charlemagne's Heir', Louis the Pious.<sup>43</sup> But the core of it was a reflection on the latter part of Charlemagne's reign. I remember well the serried ranks of distinguished German historians who listened to Tim's paper with sharp intakes of breath, puckering of brows, and shaking of

<sup>41</sup> Reuter, 'Plunder and Tribute', p. 91.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Ganshof, 'The Last Period of Charlemagne's Reign: A Study in Decomposition', in Ganshof, *The Carolingians and the Frankish Monarchy*, pp. 240–55. In a nice (if never articulated) exemplification of the king's two bodies, the aging Charlemagne's physical decline was depicted by Ganshof as symbolizing (as well as explaining) the falling apart of the state.

<sup>43</sup> The conference proceedings (1986) were published by the organizers Peter Godman and Roger Collins, as *Charlemagne's Heir: New Perspectives on the Reign of Louis the Pious (814–840)* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), with Tim's contribution at pp. 391–405. It is reprinted in *Medieval Politics*, ed. by Nelson, Chapter 14. This paper was already signalled in 'Plunder and Tribute', p. 87, n. 67.

heads. Some I'm afraid have never quite got over it! Or, at any rate, they haven't quite got it. Tim set out (I hate this word but sometimes it's the right one) to *problematize* what previous historians had thought settled and had begun to take for granted. The hitherto warlike Franks quit war making after c. 800, and they adopted an explicitly defensive posture in place of an aggressive one. Expansion stopped; and the regime ran into difficulties. The capitulary of 811 I mentioned a few moments ago, about 'Reasons men habitually give for not doing the army-service they owe', has often been cited as prime evidence for unprecedented military failure and a new social crisis, on the assumption that free men had been doing their army-service perfectly well in the golden days of conquest. So what was new? Tim argued, first, that the demands made on Frankish free men were new, and not least for that reason very unwelcome, and second, that expansion ended because of a new frame of mind, a new consciousness, on the part of the elite. In each case, Tim proceeded by demolition. Let's look at each in turn.

First, consider the *pauperes*, free men with small properties, and the *pagenses*, local squires or rich peasants. (The terms are distinct but the living men must often have come into both categories.) Earlier historians of the subject asserted that for free men to owe military obligations to the state, or the ruler as its embodiment, was traditional Frankish practice, blending an original German freedom with Roman stateness. Tim pointed out that the evidence for this assertion was extremely weak. There was nothing to suggest that all free Franks had been warriors from time immemorial, or to suggest a universal obligation to fight for the state. Charlemagne's first demand for military service from 'all, if the necessity of defending the *patria* requires it', occurs in a capitulary of 806.<sup>44</sup> A year later, a memorandum calls up 'all men beyond the Seine to serve in the army' but presents this demand as exceptional 'on account of the lack of food', in other words, a famine.<sup>45</sup> In 807, elaborate arrangements were prescribed for getting small property-holders to club together to provide a fighting-man, and modified arrangements were set out in 808.<sup>46</sup> For Tim, all this pointed to innovation. As to why this occurred, Tim

<sup>44</sup> Reuter, 'End of Carolingian Military Expansion', pp. 399–400. Tim for some reason didn't give the reference to the capitulary (*Capit.* I, no. 49, c. 2, p. 136), nor to the key article revising the MGH editor's dating of '807' to 806 (François Louis Ganshof, 'Observations sur la date de deux documents administratifs émanant de Charlemagne', *Mitteilungen de Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung*, 62 (1954), 83–91 (pp. 83–87)).

<sup>45</sup> *Memoratorium de exercitu in Gallia occidentali praeparando*, *Capit.* I, no. 48, pp. 134–35, quoted by Reuter, 'End of Carolingian Military Expansion', p. 400, with n. 48.

<sup>46</sup> *Capit.* I, nos 48, 50, pp. 134–35, 136–38.

excluded a series of possible explanations: it was not a sudden rush of egalitarianism to Charlemagne's head; not a new monarchic riposte to the aristocracy's imposing their own demands on free men and hence interposing their own interests between the state and the free (these things happened, of course, but they weren't new); not a new sense of responsibilities arising from Charlemagne's imperial title itself; not anxiety because of the sheer extent of the empire and the increasingly evident difficulties of further expansion — a sense that the River Raab meant a bridge too far (it was some 500 miles (800 kilometres) east of Mainz) when trouble on that frontier took so long to respond to from Aachen.

Having shown fairly clearly that the warfare of Charlemagne's latter years was different from before, Tim went on to link this with the end of expansion. The end of expansion was what made the new defensive strategy necessary. For Tim in the mid-1980s, characteristically, the nub of the matter was a conscious decision by rationally calculating men. Here again Tim proceeded by exclusions: it was not a matter of expanding until ancient Merovingian boundaries had been reached and then stopping; it was not a refusal to expand beyond the Franks' capacity to convert the additional population to Christianity (there was plenty of *spare* capacity in that department); it was not a desire to imitate Byzantium by using diplomacy instead of war to preserve the empire; it was not war weariness. The expanding had to stop because the imperial elite had made a new cost-benefit analysis: the risks of war had become too great and the potential yield in terms of plunder and tribute too small. Tim cited from the Royal Frankish Annals the deaths of two famous magnates in 799. (He could have added the deaths, not far from the River Raab, of two others in 802.)<sup>47</sup> It was prudence that made the Franks turn *away from* war — to pursue their best interests: survival. But — and this was Tim's concluding thought — seen from the point of view of the empire's interests, the consequences were disastrous. Once noble demands, and the desires of warriors, could no longer be met by expansion, 'internal crises [as Tim put it] [. . .] were only a matter of

<sup>47</sup> Cadaloh and Goteram, *Annales S. Emmerami maiores*, 802, ed. by H. Bresslau, MGH Scriptores, 30.2 (Hannover: Hahn, 1934), p. 93. For the place of their fatal encounter against Avars, see Herwig Wolfram, *Die Geburt Mitteleuropas: Geschichte Österreichs vor seiner Entstehung* (Berlin: Siedler, 1987), p. 259, with n. 26 at pp. 520–21: if *castellum Guntionis* is not to be identified as Güns (see P. D. King, *Charlemagne: Sources* (Kendal, 1987), Map 4), then Charles R. Bowlus, *Franks, Moravians and Magyars: The Struggle for the Middle Danube, 788–907* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), pp. 77–78, gives reasons for thinking it was somewhere else in the region of Szombathely. For a photo of a recently excavated skeleton, probably Cadaloh's, with an Avar arrow still embedded in the breastbone, see Walter Pohl, *Die Awarenkriege Karls des Grossen 788–803* (Vienna: Bundesverlag, 1988), p. 54.

time'.<sup>48</sup> Or to put it in terms that Tim didn't choose: the empire would succumb to an internal contradiction between private and public. Alas poor Louis the Pious? And if the whiff of decomposition already pervaded those increasingly fraught years after 800, alas poor Charlemagne?

Or is this contradiction too another paradox? Were there alternative options? I think there were. Charlemagne's regime, and several later Carolingian kingdoms, could offer rather wobbly versions of a steady-state and a steady state. As well as growing risk-aversion, and negative desire to shun new conquests, the Frankish elite could evince positive striving *towards* more intensive management of the resources they already had, and also *towards* the ruler who could bestow high office as a source of profit as well as prestige. The empire of Louis the Pious underwent serious ruptures and crises, but it survived, not least because of the peculiar strength and conviction with which it publicized an ideology of inclusive solicitude. Expansion by means of conquest or regular exactions of tribute was not the only way of making resources available. Perhaps precisely because those options were removed, Charles the Bald proved particularly resourceful in tapping new income-streams. Even Charles the Fat has been very convincingly shown recently to have been fast on his feet in reassembling a working empire and mobilizing it against assorted external enemies.<sup>49</sup> And once Charles the Bald and Charles the Fat have been rehabilitated, it'll be only a matter of time before someone claims that Charles the Simple was actually a pretty effective king and no argument for Carolingian decline will wash.

Tim was inclined to play down ideologies as historical drivers, whether of the ending of military expansion or of state efforts to cope with the outcomes of that policy. Perhaps that was fairly representative of Tim's thinking in the mid-1980s. Yet I think ideologies loomed larger than Tim then allowed. For instance, Charlemagne told one of his *missi* whose question about the legal status to be accorded to the offspring of a free man and an unfree woman he seems to have found particularly irritating: 'there are only free or unfree!'. But this was not just Charlemagne being brusque, nor stating the obvious: if you read the earlier part of the sentence, you find Charlemagne (characteristically) saying, 'Think if it was your free man and someone else's unfree woman, or vice versa, which of the two of you [lords]

<sup>48</sup> Reuter, 'End of Carolingian Military Expansion', p. 405.

<sup>49</sup> Janet L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald* (London: Longman, 1992); Simon MacLean, *Kingship and Politics in the Late Ninth Century: Charles the Fat*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, 4th series, 57 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). See further Airlie, 'Charlemagne and the Aristocracy', and Innes, 'Charlemagne's Government'.

would the children belong to'. I think that's Charlemagne's asking for some taking into account of actual social relations within the context of the law — for 'there are only free or unfree' is the comment of the third-century Roman jurist Paulus. Someone in Charlemagne's entourage (it would be nice to know who) was looking at late Roman law in these years, for several capitularies include citations from the *Novellae* (new laws) of the fifth-century emperor Valentinian III, appended to the Theodosian Code, specifically in the case of universal obligation to military service 'to protect our provinces and their fortunes', not to mention prohibitions on arms exports.<sup>50</sup> Given these clear cases of late Roman law influencing Charlemagne's capitularies especially after 800, we probably ought to include consciousness of imperial responsibilities as an element in the change of thinking on military obligation. If we take that road, we'd be following in the footsteps of François-Louis Ganshof but we should be prepared to go a lot further than he did. Or perhaps, we should be seeing imperial responsibilities more literal-mindedly. Charlemagne was a new Theodosius.

But there was more to Charlemagne's ideology than late Roman law. I see that ideology not so much as many-layered, sponge-cake-wise, with the sherry seeping through (Susan Reynolds's delicious metaphor), but mixed, fruitily, nuttily, and a little intoxicatingly, plum-pudding-wise. I refuse to call a pudding paradoxical. Into the *Admonitio generalis* went the decrees of late antique bishops, the Book of Exodus, and at least one Merovingian capitulary (Guntramn's edict);<sup>51</sup> and the preface evoked not David but Josiah. Both those Old Testament models were imitated just as literal-mindedly as Christian Roman emperors.<sup>52</sup> Among Charlemagne's courtiers were those who damned the previous dynasty, but also some who admired great Merovingians. The new Theodosius was also a new Aeneas as well as a new David. Charlemagne was a destroyer of idols, a builder of new Rome, an enthusiast for ancient and barbaric songs telling of the deeds of kings, a father of Europe, a

<sup>50</sup> For further references, see Janet L. Nelson, 'Translating Images of Authority: The Christian Roman Emperors in the Carolingian World', in *Images of Authority: Papers Presented to Susan Reynolds on the Occasion of her 70th Birthday*, ed. by Mary Margaret Mackenzie and Charlotte Roueché (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 194–205, repr. in Janet L. Nelson, *The Frankish World* (London: Hambledon, 1996), pp. 89–98.

<sup>51</sup> Compare the *Admonitio*'s prologue, *Capit.* I, no. 22, pp. 53–54, with the Edict, *Capit.* I, no. 5, pp. 11–12.

<sup>52</sup> For much of what follows, see the various contributions to the excellent *Charlemagne*, ed. by Story. See also now the stimulating new study of Rosamond McKitterick, *Charlemagne: The Formation of a European Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

tireless corrector of error, and a consoler of men. He certainly felt a lot more at home west of the Rhine than east of it, but Tim suggested he may have taken a more positive interest in the world beyond the Rhine in the latter years of the reign.<sup>53</sup> A man whose wives included a Lombard and two Swabians and whose mistresses included a Saxon could hardly be called a racist in the modern sense, nor a Frankish nationalist. Concerned with the welfare of poor Christians in Syria, Egypt, and Africa, and generous in gifts to Jerusalem, he engaged enthusiastically in diplomatic contacts with Baghdad and Constantinople.<sup>54</sup> He was a passionate believer in the power of the saints, St Peter above all, but was very ready to exploit that power for political ends, and while he revered the heir of St Peter, he could use strongarm tactics with individual popes and cast a cold eye on papal demands for lands that traditionally belonged to whoever ruled Italy. He was keen to spread Frankish ways of governing, but equally keen to preserve local custom and practice. Charlemagne knew about sticks and carrots: east of the Rhine the effect was to produce ways of doing and ways of thinking about the past that made assorted Germans and Slavs 'more Frankish than the Franks'.<sup>55</sup> Charlemagne was willing to park his knowledge of Theoderic the Arian heretic in order to celebrate Theoderic the great barbarian warlord and imitator of Rome. He could be imposing, but he preferred to be familiar, and direct. His took private devotions very seriously (he prayed in Latin but thought prayers could be said in any language if they asked God for what was just) but his jokes were earthy (they probably sounded a lot better in Frankish than Latin) and they made people laugh.<sup>56</sup> He preached chastity within as well as outside marriage and had a horror of incest and sodomy (especially when monks were involved), but he had a string of mistresses (perhaps not all, as his biographer claims, after the death of his fifth successive wife), he let some of his unmarried daughters have lovers at court, and he took permissiveness to scandalous limits. He had very practical knowledge about hunting and riding and especially swimming (at which no-one could beat him), about building boats and growing fruit-trees, but he also knew enough theology to exclaim more or less appropriately when he listened to readings from a deep theological treatise (the *Libri Carolini*):

<sup>53</sup> Timothy Reuter, 'Charlemagne and the World Beyond the Rhine', in *Charlemagne*, ed. by Story, pp. 183–94.

<sup>54</sup> Einhard, *Vita Karoli*, cc. 16, 27, pp. 19, 31–32.

<sup>55</sup> Reuter, 'Charlemagne and the World Beyond the Rhine', p. 193.

<sup>56</sup> For the piety and the jokes, see Janet L. Nelson, 'Did Charlemagne Have a Private Life?', in *Writing Medieval Biography c.750 to c.1250: Essays in Honour of Frank Barlow*, ed. by David Bates, Julia Crick, and Sarah Hamilton (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006), Chapter 1.

*Bene! Valde bene! Sapienter! Recte! Eleganter! Plane! Acute! Mire! Rationabiliter!*<sup>57</sup> Charlemagne, in short, was eclectic — knowledgeably and discriminatingly eclectic — but he was also focussed, and I think in his latter years, a driven man.

I propose to end this Reuter lecture with a lightning time-traveller tour of Aachen, where Charlemagne resided frequently from 794 and for most of the year during most of the years after 802. First we'll listen in on an assembly — though life at court with its big cultural agenda and fervent political conversations seems rather like a permanent assembly. But let's be sure our guide is Tim, in particular, one of his last-published papers, 'Assembly Politics', for which *his* guidebook was *The Government of the Palace*.<sup>58</sup> That gives us the right expectations: of show and substance, of formality and familiarity, of celebration and persuasion, of flavour and function, and style. It's late spring and the weather's fine so the discussions happen in the open air. There's Charlemagne — the Big Man — with his sons around him (like the host of heaven);<sup>59</sup> and his bishops, with imposingly grave faces but not richly dressed (Charlemagne doesn't like that),<sup>60</sup> their role to preside over the prayers and processions; great magnates and counts with their followings thronging behind them, clanking a bit with swords and accoutrements (that's the required costume at an assembly);<sup>61</sup> and their clerks, sheaves of parchment in hand, lists of just about everything you could think of because that's what Charlemagne wants; and a lot of *pagenses* up from the counties, also with wargear, with government business in mind and a campaign ahead: they want to know what's the news from the frontiers, and more details of where this summer's expedition is headed. Of course the assembly's managed — there's an agenda, and quite a lot's been done in steering committee. But there's also a lot of talking; and people, including the *pagenses*, feel they can say what they think. We see a local conflict played out here

<sup>57</sup> *Opus Caroli regis contra synodum (Libri Carolini)*, ed. by A. Freeman, MGH Concilia, 2, Supplementum 1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1998), pp. 129, 140, 194, 199, 217, 224, 267, 292, 295, 297, 300, 359, 404, 410, etc., with excellent comments, 'Introduction', pp. 48–50.

<sup>58</sup> Timothy Reuter, 'Assembly Politics in Western Europe From the Eighth Century to the Twelfth', in *The Medieval World*, ed. by Peter Linehan and Janet L. Nelson (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 433–50, repr. in *Medieval Politics*, ed. by Nelson, Chapter 11.

<sup>59</sup> Notker, *Gesta Karoli Magni*, II, 6, ed. by H. Haefele, MGH Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum, n.s., 12 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1959), p. 57; see also the poetic descriptions of the court by Angilbert, Alcuin, and Theodulf, in *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance*, ed. and trans. by Peter Godman (London: Duckworth, 1985), pp. 112–18, 118–21, 150–63.

<sup>60</sup> Alcuin *Ep.* 230, ed. by Dümmler, *Epistolae Karolini Aevi*, II, 375.

<sup>61</sup> *Capit.* I, no. 25, c. 4, p. 67.

at the centre, judged and contained. We see an appointment to high office announced and confirmed, a privilege ceremoniously handed over, a capitulary enacted, an embassy received. The King doesn't dominate proceedings (his voice is higher than we'd expected, given his height and size), though when it comes to decision time, he says what he needs to say. We're watching the relationship between ruler and political community being played out before our eyes, and that community defining itself for itself in relation to Charlemagne. Frank giving of views is the procedural form and consensus the outcome. It's a style that Charlemagne's been promoting, and we know (though our informants don't) that it'll set the pattern for the next few centuries.

Now to the palace: we're admitted (as distinguished visitors) to the *solarium* — the upstairs room, where more serious conversations happen, counsellors and diplomats wait around for a chance to present policy documents and letters to doorkeepers, thence to Charlemagne, influential people, some of them women, stand discussing in two or threes in window-embrasures for a little privacy and fresh air, and we're spotting who has access to the Emperor.<sup>62</sup> Next, to the baths: this is where the Emperor splashes around with a hundred or so of his kinsmen, courtiers, and warriors — but they say the conversations are serious.<sup>63</sup> And a quick visit to the park: there's the elephant, gift of the king of the Persians, a huge token of oriental esteem for Frankish power, and a prestigious denizen of the palace's environs, well-fed, no doubt, with greenstuff from the vegetable garden of one of Aachen's surrounding *villae*.<sup>64</sup>

Back to the hall for some refreshment with the entire court, including the royal women. When they hear where we're from they invite us to join our fellow-countryman Alcuin in his special Anglo-Saxon meal of porridge and beer: the laugh's on us. But there'll also be lots of spicy Mediterranean food, for this cuisine,

<sup>62</sup> *Solarium*: Notker, *Gesta Karoli*, I, 30, p. 41; and see now Mayke de Jong, 'Charlemagne's Balcony: The Solarium in Ninth-Century Narratives', in *The Long Morning of Medieval Europe: New Directions in Early Medieval Studies*, ed. by Jennifer R. Davis and Michael McCormick (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 277–89.

<sup>63</sup> The baths and the conversations, see Nelson, 'Aachen as a Place of Power', pp. 235–36; Nelson, 'Was Charlemagne's Court a Courtly Society?', pp. 42–43.

<sup>64</sup> On the elephant, see *Annales regni Francorum*, s.a. 801, 802, pp. 116–17; Einhard, *Vita Karoli*, c. 16, p. 19. For the vegetable garden, maybe an impression can be gained from *De Villis*, c. 70, pp. 90–91. For diplomatic gifts, see Janet L. Nelson, 'The Setting of the Gift in the Reign of Charlemagne', in *The Languages of Gift in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. by Wendy Davies and Paul Fouracre (Cambridge, forthcoming).

like the regime, is both Frankish and cosmopolitan.<sup>65</sup> We're in luck: Angilbert, abbot, poet, and acknowledged lover of Charlemagne's beloved daughter Bertha, is going to read his poem celebrating Charlemagne as 'David the glory of poets'.<sup>66</sup> The bit about kissing David's beautiful toes strikes Anglo-Saxons as just slightly over the top.

No time for a siesta (though we know the Emperor will be taking his usual nap).<sup>67</sup> Time for the highspot of the visit. As we move as fast as decorum permits along the great covered colonnade from the hall we won't miss a sight of the statue of Theoderic on horseback. Charlemagne had it brought all the way from Ravenna. Think barbarian, think Roman.<sup>68</sup>

Finally to the church: it doesn't look so imposing from the outside, but when you're inside, it's magnificent. The marbles are from Italy, but some local work is here as well: more rich mixing. From down here, we can't even see the throne. Let's go up to the gallery, and the west side. We'll look at the bronze railings and the little gate, which opens to reveal for us — and for Charlemagne when he's on the throne — a direct view across to the altar of the Saviour on the side of the gallery and down to the altars of the Virgin Mary and behind it on the ground floor, the main altar.<sup>69</sup> So the church at Aachen, splendid, sacred, monumental, is not so much a theatre of monarchy, nor even a liturgical theatre for the monarch, as the site where ruler and people join in worship (apparently you can fit seven thousand people in here at a pinch) and the monarch has a grandstand seat, among all his people, at the enactment of the liturgy.<sup>70</sup> In fact Charlemagne's invisible to most of the rest of the people. The point of it all is to bring, representatively in the medieval sense, the

<sup>65</sup> Alcuin's porridge contrasted with the poet's own preference for spiced meat: Theodulf, Poem-epistle, lines 191–98, *Poetry*, ed. and trans. by Godman, pp. 160–61.

<sup>66</sup> Angilbert, Poem-epistle, lines 1–22, lines 72–77, *Poetry*, ed. and trans. by Godman, pp. 112–17.

<sup>67</sup> Einhard, *Vita Karoli*, c. 24, p. 29.

<sup>68</sup> Theoderic's statue: see Matthew Innes, 'Teutons or Trojans? The Carolingians and the Germanic Past', in *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. by Yitzhak Hen and Matthew Innes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 227–49; and Nelson, 'Was Charlemagne's Court a Courtly Society?', p. 40.

<sup>69</sup> See Donald Bullough, *The Age of Charlemagne* (London: Elek, 1965), pp. 150, 153: still the best account of the church's layout, media, and message.

<sup>70</sup> See Nelson, 'Aachen as a Place of Power', pp. 220, 222. On Charlemagne as a man with a mission, see Chris Wickham, *The Inheritance of Rome: A History of Europe from 400 to 1000* (London: Allen Lane, 2009), pp. 382, 384.

Christian people into communication with the Almighty and with all of each other. It's a con-gregation — a flocking-together. The parts cohere in the assemblage.

This has been the second Reuter Memorial lecture. One thing that's certain is that there will be many more, because historians will still be reflecting on Tim's work at the back end of the twenty-first century. In rather shamelessly plundering Tim's work on Charlemagne, and then (to mix a metaphor) standing like a dwarf on the shoulders of a giant, I have done very partial justice to Tim's achievement as a medieval historian. For it could be said that the greatest of his work dealt mostly with a later period than Charlemagne's, or else it ranged widely across Carolingian and later themes. When in Germany, Tim did wonderful work as a middleman, writing literally dozens of reviews of Anglophone scholarship for the benefit of German readers of *Deutsches Archiv*, translating German work into English. But above all he addressed himself to great themes in high-medieval German history and historiography: the Ottonians and Salians, the Church in the Reich, Frederick Barbarossa. In the end, he squared circles by writing the most thought-provoking comparative history that to my knowledge any medievalist has produced. He wrote about the Becket dispute through German eyes, and about German government through English (or rather Angevin) ones. These are paradoxes for each of us to expose and resolve for ourselves. What we'll find, I think, is a wholeness in the parts of Tim's work. It was not homogeneous or symmetrical — of course not, because the world of the earlier Middle Ages was extremely diverse and untidy and, yes, full of what *we* can't help perceiving as contradictions. But *they*, our historical subjects, did not see themselves as bundles of contradictions, and neither should we. Perhaps the strangest part of that world's strangeness was its capacity to accommodate. For all its diverse parts, it was in the end a whole, and, quite *un*paradoxically, Tim has shown all of us how to understand it so.

# THE POLITICS OF REBELLION: THE *ÆTHELING* ÆTHELWOLD AND WEST SAXON ROYAL SUCCESSION, 899–902

Ryan Lavelle

It is a testament to Tim Reuter's life and work that he never confined his studies to any single area. For him, as for the subjects of his work, the North Sea formed a means of communication more often than it formed a barrier. Although, to my knowledge, Reuter's publications did not include the detailed examination of the rebellion of the renegade royal son (*ætheling*) Æthelwold, which took place in the south of the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Wessex following the death of King Alfred in late October 899,<sup>1</sup> it is appropriate to invoke his comparative work in the context of its study. This is not least because the events reflect the limitations of authority in the development of an early medieval kingdom, and the coding of political and social relations which manifested themselves in the protagonists' actions.<sup>2</sup> Royal rebellion — that centred upon discontented members of the

This is an extended version of my paper delivered at the 'Texts, Histories and Historiography' conference at Southampton in 2004. I wish to record my thanks to the delegates for some useful feedback, to Barbara Yorke for reading an earlier draft of this paper, and to Janine Lavelle, Trish Skinner, and this paper's anonymous reviewer for their editorial comments.

<sup>1</sup> *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (hereafter cited as *ASC*) 901 (= 899/900), 903 A, 904 BCD (= 902), 904 A, 905 BCD (= 902/03): *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel*, ed. by J. Earle and C. Plummer, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1892–99), I, 91–95 (text); *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Revised Translation*, ed. by D. Whitelock, with D. C. Douglas and S. I. Tucker (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1961; rev. edn, 1965), pp. 58–60 (trans.).

<sup>2</sup> Such observations were discussed in Timothy Reuter, 'The Making of England and Germany, 850–1050: Points of Comparison and Difference', in *Medieval Europeans: Studies in Ethnic*

ruling family — featured in Reuter's interpretation of the development of late Carolingian and Ottonian kingship in the *Königslandschaften*.<sup>3</sup> He drew a contrast with the Saxon magnates' 'open rebellion' from the reign of Henry II onward by showing that through the ninth to eleventh centuries royally focussed rebellion and its resolution through reconciliation or political change was 'part of the normal stuff of politics'.<sup>4</sup> Although aspects of the rebellion of Æthelwold and reactions to it may show ways in which the Anglo-Saxon state was developing along its own idiosyncratic path (for example, the fact that Æthelwold died in battle in 902 contrasts with continental examples of reconciliation with his cousin or capture and relegation to a monastery<sup>5</sup>), the actions of 899–902 nonetheless sit quite comfortably in a European context. Indeed, it will be shown that they reflected the conduct of politics in the Carolingian realm of the ninth century and presaged tenth-century actions in Ottonian Germany.

In order to understand the context of Æthelwold's actions it is first necessary to cite in full the relevant passage from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, which details the first stage of his actions after the death of Alfred:

*Identity and National Perspectives in Medieval Europe*, ed. by A. P. Smyth (London: Macmillan, 1998), pp. 53–70 (pp. 58–59) (now repr. in *Medieval Politics and Modern Mentalities*, ed. by Janet L. Nelson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 284–99). For key studies on political ritual, see Gerd Althoff, *Verwandte, Freunde und Getreue: Zum politischen Stellenwert der Gruppenbindungen in früheren Mittelalter* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1990), published in English as *Family, Friends and Followers: Political and Social Bonds in Medieval Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). Geoffrey Koziol, *Begging Pardon and Favor: Ritual and Political Order in Early Medieval France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992).

<sup>3</sup> Timothy Reuter, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages, c. 800–1056* (London: Longman, 1991), pp. 49–51 for the discontent focussed around the sons of Louis the Pious; pp. 199–20 for Arnulf's seizure of power from Charles the Fat; pp. 137–38 and 150–52 for Arnulf of Bavaria's grievances; pp. 152–54 for the Saxon revolt led by Otto's half-brother against Otto I; pp. 155–56 for Liudolf's rebellion against Otto I.

<sup>4</sup> Reuter, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages*, pp. 199–208. Reuter considers aspects of later Salian rebellion in his 'Unruhestufung, Fehde, Rebellion, Widerstand: Gewalt und Frieden in der Politik der Salierzeit', in *Die Salier und das Reich: Gesellschaftlicher und Ideengeschichtlicher Wandel im Reich der Salier*, vol. III, ed. by Stefan Weinfurter (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1992), pp. 297–325 (now translated as 'Peace-breaking, Feud, Rebellion, Resistance: Violence and Peace in the Politics of the Salian Era', in *Medieval Politics*, ed. by Nelson, pp. 355–87).

<sup>5</sup> See *Annales Bertiniani*, ed. by G. Waitz, MGH Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum, 5 (Hannover: Hahn, 1883) (hereafter cited as *AB*), s.a. 852, 853, pp. 41–43; *Annals of St Bertin*, trans. by Janet L. Nelson (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), pp. 74–76 (trans.).

Æthelwold, his [i.e. King Edward's] father's brother's son, rode and seized the residence at Wimborne and at *Twinham* [Christchurch] against the will of the king and his councillors. Then the king rode with his army until he encamped at Badbury, near Wimborne, and Æthelwold stayed inside the residence with the men who had given him their allegiance; and he had barricaded all the gates against them, and declared that he would live there or die there. Then, meanwhile, the *ætheling* rode away by night, and went to the army in Northumbria, and they accepted him as king and gave allegiance to him. Then the woman was seized whom he had abducted without the king's consent, and contrary to the bishops' orders — for she had been consecrated a nun.<sup>6</sup>

The actions of Æthelwold stood in contrast to the dynastic authoritarianism displayed in the ninth-century West Saxon royal family. Although Æthelwold was a member of the royal house and thus could make Carolingianesque use of notions of familial legitimacy,<sup>7</sup> his actions recalled earlier, violent means of succession through competition between rival claimants in the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms, as demonstrated in Wessex by the likes of Cyneheard's attempted usurpation of the West Saxon throne from his kinsman Cynewulf in 786.<sup>8</sup> The means whereby the kindred of the legendary West Saxon founder, Cerdic, and by extension the agnatic kindred of Alfred became a well-established dynasty may appear impressive,<sup>9</sup> but

<sup>6</sup> 'Ʒ þa gerad Aþelwold æþeling his fæderan sunu þone ham æt Winburnan, Ʒ æt Tweoxn Eam, þæs cinges unþances Ʒ his witenan. Þa rad se cing mid fyrde oð he gewicode æt Baddanbyrig wið Winburnan, Ʒ Aþelwold sæt binnan þam ham mid þam mannum þe him to gebugon, Ʒ he hæfde ealle ða gatu forworhte inn to him, Ʒ sæde þæt he wolde oþþe ðær libban oððe þær licgean. Þa under þam þa rad se æþeling on niht aweg Ʒ gesohte þone here on Norðhymbrum, Ʒ hi hine underfengon hym to cinge Ʒ him to bugon. Þa berad mann þæt wif þæt he hæfde ær genumen butan þæs cinges leafe Ʒ ofer þara bisceopa gebodu, forðon heo wæs ær to nunnan gehalgod.' *ASC* 901 CD (= 899/900), ed. by Earle and Plummer, I, 91–93 (trans. by Whitelock and others, pp. 58–59). There are some textual differences in the Winchester ('A') manuscript of the *ASC*, which will be discussed below.

<sup>7</sup> See Stuart Airlie, 'The Nearly Men: Boso of Vienne and Arnulf of Bavaria', in *Nobles and Nobility in Medieval Europe: Concepts, Origins, Transformations*, ed. by Anne J. Duggan (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2000), pp. 25–41; Airlie, 'Semper fideles? Loyauté envers les carolingiens comme constituant de l'identité aristocratique', in *La royauté et les élites dans l'europe carolingienne (début IX<sup>e</sup> siècle aux environs de 920)*, ed. by Régine Le Jan (Lille: CRHEN-O, 1998), pp. 129–43 (pp. 139–41); and Simon MacLean, *Kingship and Politics in the Late Ninth Century: The Reign of Charles the Fat*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, 4th series, 57 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 20–21.

<sup>8</sup> *ASC* 755 (= 757), ed. by Earle and Plummer, I, 46–49 (trans. by Whitelock and others, pp. 30–31).

<sup>9</sup> See Richard Abels, 'Royal Succession and the Growth of Political Stability in Ninth-Century Wessex', *Haskins Society Journal*, 12 (2002), 83–97.

Æthelwold's dramatic actions show an apparent degree of instability. They were a manifestation of the way in which the potential for violence lurked close to the surface of West Saxon kingship in order to demonstrate — and indeed challenge — its legitimacy.<sup>10</sup> In these ways, to borrow Tim Reuter's words cited above, they were the normal stuff of politics.

In this chapter, I intend to address the significance of the rebellion, making some comparative use of other attempted coups in ninth- and tenth-century Europe, by taking into account the manner in which norms of political legitimization manifested themselves in Æthelwold and Edward's evident expectations, actions, and counteractions. This entails consideration of Alfred's plans for posthumous family endowment, Æthelwold's responses to these, the relevance — that is, the sense of place — of the landed estates and locations of events, and finally the assertion of legitimacy by Edward in response to Æthelwold. As part of this, I will consider the different stages of Æthelwold's actions: the first stage was the abortive coup attempt at Wimborne followed by Æthelwold's apparently ignominious retreat, outlined in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* extract above. Having gained the support of the Vikings of Northumbria, who accepted him as their king ('underfengon hym to cinge'), the second strategy was an advance across southern England with the support of allies, which precipitated a West Saxon response resulting in a battle in East Anglia at the 'Holme', where Æthelwold was killed.<sup>11</sup> Whilst I focus on events within Wessex and their significance for the West Saxon kingdom in 899–900, the second stage of Æthelwold's actions was important, not least for what these signalled for relations between Wessex and its neighbours: between 899–900 and 901–02 there was a change in the way in which Æthelwold's actions were perceived, even if he did not intend it. By the second stage, he was seen less as a renegade member of the royal house and rather — in the words of the *Annals of St Neots* — 'king of the pagans' ('rex paganorum').<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> For the 'military legitimacy' of 'warlords' in the eleventh century, see Kelly DeVries, 'Harold Godwinson in Wales: Military Legitimacy in Anglo-Saxon England', in *The Normans and their Adversaries at War: Essays in Memory of C. Warren Hollister*, ed. by Richard P. Abels and Bernard S. Bachrach (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2001), pp. 65–85.

<sup>11</sup> For events in East Anglia and an attempt to locate the battlefield, see Cyril R. Hart, *The Danelaw* (London: Hambledon, 1992), pp. 511–15; James Campbell, 'What Is Not Known About the Reign of Edward the Elder', in *Edward the Elder, 899–924*, ed. by N. J. Higham and D. H. Hill (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 12–24.

<sup>12</sup> *The Annals of St Neots with Vita Prima Sancti Neoti*, in *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle: A Collaborative Edition*, vol. XVII, ed. by David N. Dumville and Michael Lapidge (Cambridge: Brewer, 1985), p. 51.

### *Family Values*

To consider Æthelwold's actions, it is necessary to examine dynastic relations in the previous generations. While recent work on Alfred's family may have increased the familiarity of this terrain,<sup>13</sup> laying out the relevant details shows the politics of ensuring succession from Alfred to his son and, ultimately, why, like Carolingian malcontents, Æthelwold probably felt aggrieved at being passed over. Æthelwold's father was King Æthelred I of Wessex (866–71), elder brother of Alfred. In 871, Æthelred died. Alfred's biographer, Asser, is emphatic regarding the succession to the kingdom. As Asser points out (no less than three times), Alfred had agreed with Æthelred to become, and was recognized as, 'secundarius' — a term previously unused for Anglo-Saxon succession which may be translated as 'heir apparent' — before the latter's death in 871.<sup>14</sup> Although with the unprecedented danger posed by Vikings in 871 these had been extraordinary circumstances which required an undisputed succession, Asser's emphasis on Alfred's apparent capacity for rule as the designated heir to the kingdom nonetheless reflects sensitivity on the subject of Alfred's succession. Asser was writing on this in the 890s, presumably with one eye upon the presence of Æthelwold (and possibly his elder brother) in

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, Ann Williams, 'Some Notes and Considerations on Problems Connected with the English Royal Succession, 860–1066', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 1 (1979), 144–67, 225–33 (pp. 148–49); David N. Dumville, 'The Ætheling: A Study in Anglo-Saxon Constitutional History', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 8 (1979), 1–33; Barbara Yorke, 'Edward as Ætheling', and Patrick Wormald, 'On þa Wæpnedbealfe: Kingship and Royal Property from Æthelwulf to Edward the Elder', both in *Edward the Elder*, ed. by Higham and Hill, pp. 25–39 and 264–79. Pauline Stafford, 'Succession and Inheritance: A Gendered Perspective on Alfred's Family History', in *Alfred the Great: Papers from the Eleventh Centenary Conference*, ed. by Timothy Reuter (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), pp. 251–64. Abels, 'Royal Succession'. For a yet more complex picture of royal succession, complicated by what are perceived as potential tensions amongst Alfred's own agnatic kin, see Janet L. Nelson, 'Reconstructing a Royal Family: Reflections on Alfred, from Asser, Chapter 2', in *People and Places in Northern Europe, 500–1600: Essays in Honour of Peter Hayes Sawyer*, ed. by Ian N. Wood and Niels Lund (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1991), pp. 47–66, especially pp. 63–64. Simon Keynes's extensive notes on Alfred's will, in *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred and Other Contemporary Sources*, ed. by Simon D. Keynes and Michael Lapidge (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983), pp. 313–26, are also important.

<sup>14</sup> Asser, *De rebus gestis Alfredi*, chs 29, 38 and 42, in *Asser's Life of King Alfred, Together with the Annals of Saint Neots Erroneously Ascribed to Asser*, ed. by W. H. Stevenson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1904), pp. 23–24, 29, 42; translation in *Alfred the Great*, ed. by Keynes and Lapidge, pp. 77, 79 and 80–81. See Dumville, 'The Ætheling', pp. 1–2, and p. 24.

Wessex, and he shared his patron's concern for their possible threat to a patrilineal succession for Alfred's son, Edward.<sup>15</sup>

While Æthelwold's elder brother, Æthelhelm,<sup>16</sup> had been too young to be throneworthy in 871, in 899 Æthelwold, presumably by then the surviving son of Æthelred I, would have had a suitable claim.<sup>17</sup> Æthelwold's mother, Wulfthryth, as both Barbara Yorke and Pauline Stafford have noted, was recorded as a consecrated queen in a charter of Æthelred I, something which Alfred's wife (and Edward's mother), Ealhswith, never was.<sup>18</sup> Æthelwold's sole appearance in the witness list of an Anglo-Saxon charter, probably from the 890s, records Æthelwold with Edward: both are *filiis regis* but Æthelwold receives precedence. This may be a rarity, belying an otherwise obscured importance — at least, as will be suggested below, on a regional basis — during the reign of Alfred.<sup>19</sup>

However, much had been done to assert Alfred's agnatic kin at the expense of the descendants of Æthelred I. Again, I follow Stafford and Yorke in noting Asser's comments on the notion that West Saxon kings' wives had never been known as queens. Although Asser concedes that it was a 'disputed and infamous' ('controversiam, immo infamiam') and 'perverse and detestable custom' ('perversa et detestabilis consuetudo'), these comments were presumably made in response to

<sup>15</sup> Asser, *De rebus*, ch. 42, ed. by Stevenson, pp. 32–34 (trans. by Keynes and Lapidge, pp. 80–81). Stafford, 'Succession and Inheritance', pp. 258–59. See also Yorke, 'Edward as Ætheling', pp. 29–31.

<sup>16</sup> Æthelhelm is assumed to have been Æthelwold's elder brother by virtue of his precedence in Alfred's will: *Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography*, ed. by P. H. Sawyer (London: Royal Historical Society, 1968); revised version ed. by S. E. Kelly (forthcoming), ed. by S. M. Miller for the British Academy–Royal Historical Society Anglo-Saxon Charters Web site <<http://www.trin.cam.ac.uk/chartwww>>, no. 1507 (AD 871x899). For a discussion of the codicil to Alfred's will, and an edition of the will, see *Charters of the New Minster, Winchester*, ed. by S. M. Miller, Anglo-Saxon Charters, 9 (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 2001), pp. 3–12; *Alfred the Great*, ed. by Keynes and Lapidge, pp. 173–78, 313–26.

<sup>17</sup> Dumville 'The Ætheling', p. 3.

<sup>18</sup> *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, ed. by Sawyer, no. 340 (AD 868); Yorke, 'Edward as Ætheling', p. 31; Stafford, 'Succession and Inheritance', p. 259.

<sup>19</sup> *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, ed. by Sawyer, no. 356 (AD 871x899); Yorke, 'Edward as Ætheling', p. 31, following Simon D. Keynes, 'The West Saxon Charters of King Æthelwulf and his Sons', *English Historical Review*, 109 (1994), 1109–49 (pp. 1137–39), favours an 890s date for this charter, suggesting that this was evidence of Æthelwold's senior ranking; cf. Nelson, 'Reconstructing a Royal Family', p. 63, who favours a date 'not many years after 871' on the basis of the charter's witness list.

the potential threat posed by Æthelred and Wulfthryth's sons to the succession of Alfred's agnatic kin.<sup>20</sup> The division of lands in King Æthelwulf's will, recorded in King Alfred's own will at the end of the ninth century, made Alfred the legal inheritor of the lands of his elder brother, Æthelred, an agreement made at the otherwise unidentified *Swinbeorg*. Alfred's claim to the right to allocate these lands, agreed — the will is careful to state — at an assembly at *Langandene* after Æthelred's death, shows his royal succession. Alfred's designation of these lands to his eldest son, Edward, was thus an indication of Edward's intended succession.<sup>21</sup>

It is also possible that Edward had been crowned as Alfred's successor during the old king's lifetime. Simon Keynes has suggested that the signature of Edward as *rex*, alongside his own father's designation as *rex Saxonum*, on a Kentish single-sheet charter's witness list may indicate that just as with his apprenticeship in military experience, Edward was being allowed experience of kingship in a peripheral region of the West Saxon kingdom.<sup>22</sup> In the manner of a Louis or a Charles, this followed Carolingian precedent, and a king's role in his successor's coronation had the added bonus of ensuring an oath of loyalty for the designated successor while the ruler was still alive. (Perhaps under these circumstances, too, it may be significant that Edward could count most upon the support of the men of Kent at the Battle of the Holme, discussed below.)

Nonetheless, evident complications show that succession was a contentious issue. The first part of King Alfred's will seems to indicate that a previous version of the will had been disputed at the behest of Alfred's young kinsmen, presumably the sons of the dead Æthelred I. Alfred asserts that this was resolved at the *Langandene* assembly.<sup>23</sup> As a result of that second assembly, convened before the late ninth-century date of the charter recording Edward as *rex*, the surviving will

<sup>20</sup> Asser, *De rebus*, chs 13–15, ed. by Stevenson, pp. 10–14 (trans. by Keynes and Lapidge, pp. 70–72). Stafford, 'Succession and Inheritance', pp. 259–64; Yorke, 'Edward as Ætheling', p. 31; cf. Nelson, 'Reconstructing a Royal Family', pp. 54–56, who suggests that here Asser was conscious of Alfred's mother's unconsecrated status (although it should be said that neither interpretation need exclude the other).

<sup>21</sup> Yorke, 'Edward as Ætheling', p. 30. See also Wormald, 'On þa Wæpnedhealf', pp. 268–70.

<sup>22</sup> Simon D. Keynes, 'The Control of Kent in the Ninth Century', *Early Medieval Europe*, 2 (1993), 111–32; *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, ed. by Sawyer, no. 350 (AD 898). See also Yorke, 'Edward as Ætheling', pp. 31–33. For Edward's military experience, see Æthelweard, *Chronicon Æthelweardi: The Chronicle of Æthelweard*, ed. and trans. by A. Campbell (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1962), pp. 49–50.

<sup>23</sup> *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, ed. by Sawyer, no. 1507. *Charters of the New Minster*, ed. by Miller, p. 4 (trans. by Keynes and Lapidge, pp. 174–75).

reflected a concession by Alfred to the wishes of the dead King Æthelred, who evidently intended that his own sons would inherit lands which he had inherited from Æthelwulf. As 'bookland' (i.e. land held by right of charter), there were necessary controls upon the descent of land within the family.<sup>24</sup> The case in point is Alfred's bequest of the estate at Steyning (Sussex) to Æthelwold, amongst just three estates earmarked for the *ætheling*. Domesday Book indicates that Steyning had been a comparatively large estate,<sup>25</sup> and St Cuthman's church, Steyning (dedicated to a saint with an arguably West Saxon name), may have been a minster church, before the ninth century.<sup>26</sup> The *Annals of St Neots*, written in the twelfth century but arguably using an otherwise lost version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, record Steyning as the burial place of King Æthelwulf, the great patriarch of the West Saxon royal family.<sup>27</sup> Although as Pauline Stafford suggests, Æthelwulf's son Æthelbald had probably relegated his father's posthumous status by having him buried at Steyning,<sup>28</sup> it is unlikely, as Wormald pointed out, that Alfred would have been willing in giving away his father's resting place.<sup>29</sup> Any importance associated with Steyning may have been deliberately reduced during Alfred's reign. If Alfred's hand was forced by customary tenure, he was sticking to the letter if not the spirit of the fraternal agreement, denying the place its significance, while — arguably following Æthelred's wishes — bequeathing it to Æthelwold: the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle's* late ninth-century account records that Æthelwulf's body 'lies at Winchester' (*liþ æt Wintan ceastre*), indicating that it had been moved from its original site.<sup>30</sup> Evidently, Steyning was no longer such an impressive bequest.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Wormald, 'On þa Wæpnedhealfē', p. 270.

<sup>25</sup> It is assessed in 1066 at just over ninety-nine hides of land in total: *Domesday Book: Sussex*, ed. by J. Morris (Chichester: Phillimore, 1976), 5:2 (fol. 17b); 13:10 (fol. 28a).

<sup>26</sup> J. Blair, 'Saint Cuthman, Steyning and Bosham', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 135 (1997), 173–92. I am grateful to Barbara Yorke for the suggestion that Cuthman's name may have been related to the West Saxon royal family.

<sup>27</sup> *Annals of St Neots*, ed. by Dumville and Lapidge, p. 51.

<sup>28</sup> Stafford, 'Succession and Inheritance', p. 258; Yorke, 'Edward as Ætheling', p. 30. For the rebellion, Asser, *De rebus*, ch. 12, ed. by Stevenson, pp. 9–10 (trans. by Keynes and Lapidge, p. 70).

<sup>29</sup> Wormald, 'On þa Wæpnedhealfē', p. 270. Stafford, 'Succession and Inheritance', p. 258, also notes that moving the body removed 'any stigma attached to the burial'.

<sup>30</sup> *ASC* 855 ADE, 856 CF (= 858), ed. by Earle and Plummer, I, 66–67 (trans. by Whitelock and others, pp. 43–44).

<sup>31</sup> Bishop Denewulf of Winchester's complaints to Edward the Elder regarding the 'stripped bare' (*aburod*) state of land at Beddington gifted to the Bishop might remind us of an Alfridian

The other two estates bequeathed by Alfred to Æthelwold were in Surrey and, though significant in Domesday Book, they may not compare to those bequeathed to other members of Alfred's family.<sup>32</sup> Although, as an *ætheling* of the royal family, he may have expected to receive maintenance from other lands not in Alfred's will, presumably including some of those lands designated as providing the 'Farm of One Night' in Domesday Book or any lands designated for *æthelings*,<sup>33</sup> a marginalization of Æthelwold seems to be shown in the distance of these bequeathed lands from the heart of power — indeed, as will be argued, from Æthelwold's own support base. The east of the kingdom had been a place for the division of power during the reign of Æthelwulf, which explains why the nephews received lands here,<sup>34</sup> but there may have been a degree of otherness' to this part of the kingdom, highlighted by Æthelwulf's posthumous relegation through burial at Steyning.<sup>35</sup>

Commenting on the apparent integrity of the *Reich* in the tenth and eleventh centuries, it is perhaps instructive to note here Tim Reuter's comment on the ninth-century east Frankish subdivision: by the tenth century 'it was no longer an option' and in the eleventh century 'it is significant that it was not even considered'.<sup>36</sup> Although Jinty Nelson has reflected on the potential for the division of Alfred's kingdom between his sons, it should be said that her suggestion was based on Alfred's will, which related to family booklands rather than customary royal lands.<sup>37</sup> Even if, as Nelson suggests, Alfred kept his cards to his chest as much as

capacity for gifting less-than-valuable lands: *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, ed. by Sawyer, no. 1444 (AD 900x909). For this issue, see Robin Fleming, 'Monastic Lands and England's Defence in the Viking Age', *English Historical Review*, 100 (1985), 247–65.

<sup>32</sup> These were Godalming and Guildford (Surrey); Godalming was valued at £25 in 1066 and hidated at twenty-four hides, with an appurtenant church at £4 and three hides; Guildford was a borough in 1066, with seventy-five *haga* worth £18. 0s. 3d. *Domesday Book: Surrey*, ed. by J. Morris (Chichester: Phillimore, 1975), 1:1a; 14 (fols 30a; 30d).

<sup>33</sup> See here Ryan Lavelle, 'The "Farm of One Night" and the Organisation of Royal Estates in Late Anglo-Saxon Wessex', *Haskins Society Journal*, 14 (2005 for 2003), 53–82. Dumville, 'The *Ætheling*', pp. 5–6; Wormald, 'On þa Wapnedhealf', p. 268.

<sup>34</sup> See Yorke, 'Edward as *Ætheling*', p. 30.

<sup>35</sup> Stafford, 'Succession and Inheritance', p. 258. For Sussex, see Peter Brandon, 'The South Saxon *Andredesweald*', in *The South Saxons*, ed. by Peter Brandon (Chichester: Phillimore, 1978), pp. 138–59.

<sup>36</sup> Reuter, 'Making of England and Germany', p. 56. See also Reuter, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages*, p. 150.

<sup>37</sup> Nelson, 'Reconstructing a Royal Family', p. 63.

possible, the apparent indivisibility of Alfred's Wessex is nonetheless noteworthy. Reuter may have been right to stress the comparative tardiness of *English* indivisibility,<sup>38</sup> but it could also be argued from this that Wessex was notable in remaining undivided. Despite the fractures of power in the 'English' kingdom between Edgar and Eadwig in the 950s, as well as Cnut and Edmund in 1016, Wessex itself remained a discrete entity.<sup>39</sup> In this respect at least, by emphasizing indivisibility in its royal heartland, the West Saxon state which emerged at the beginning of the tenth century may have been more impressive as a Carolingian successor state than Reuter gave the West Saxon royal family credit for.

One other factor should also be considered in terms of Æthelwold's own position. If Æthelwold was making a bid for a greater share of power, if not the throne itself, his elder brother had not. This would suggest that Æthelhelm had predeceased Alfred and therefore the lands in Alfred's will bequeathed to Æthelhelm would have gone elsewhere, to any offspring or to some other party.<sup>40</sup> Whether or not Æthelhelm had agreed to designate the future descent of any lands to his brother, Æthelwold, it was presumably in Alfred and Edward's interests to prevent this. If Æthelwold was not due to receive his brother's lands at the death of Alfred, then this too would have been a greater ignominy. Any loss of the control of lands which had been designated for Æthelred's kin meant a lack of a powerbase from which Æthelwold could make a claim for the throne.

With the pressure ratcheted up against any claim for kingship which could be made by the *atheling*, it is possible to understand why Æthelwold acted after Alfred's death. Rebellion here seems to have been undertaken through a combination of desperation and the opportunity offered by interregnum.<sup>41</sup> In common with the

<sup>38</sup> Reuter, 'Making of England and Germany', p. 57.

<sup>39</sup> For references to the Thames as a boundary between Wessex and the rest of England, see [Byrhtferth], *Vita Dunstani Auctore B*, in *Memorials of St Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. by William Stubbs, Rolls Series, 63 (London: Longman, 1874), p. 36; trans. in *English Historical Documents*, vol. 1, ed. by Dorothy Whitelock, 2nd edn (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1979) (hereafter *EHD* 1), p. 901; *ASC* 1016 C, ed. by Earle and Plummer, I, 148 (trans. by Whitelock and others, p. 95). See also Barbara Yorke, *Wessex in the Early Middle Ages* (London: Leicester University Press, 1995), pp. 96–98.

<sup>40</sup> These lands were Aldingbourne (Sussex), Compton (Sussex), Crondall (Hants.), Beeding (Sussex), ?Eastbourne (Sussex), Thunderfield (Surrey), and Eashing (Surrey).

<sup>41</sup> A note on the chronology is necessary here, as the *Chronicle's* order of events is ambiguous. It is possible that Æthelwold had acted after the coronation rather than in the late autumn of 899. However, Æthelweard's record of upheaval in Northumbria, recorded before Edward's coronation, is an indication of the circumstances in which Æthelwold opportunistically came to power in

actions of Pippin II of Aquitaine, nephew of Charles the Bald, in the 830s–860s, Liudolf of Suabia, son of Otto I, in the German *Reich* in 953–54, and indeed Æthelwold's uncle Æthelbald's seizure of power from his father in Wessex in 855–56, those of Æthelwold stemmed from grievances leading from a denial of power, perhaps even a fear of being sidelined.<sup>42</sup> While in common with other royal rebels, this was evidently not a good point of departure for Æthelwold in 899 but, as will be shown, his actions were well grounded in the art of the possible.

### *The Significance of Wimborne*

Contextualized in the landed politics of the West Saxon royal family, Æthelwold's seizure of Wimborne Minster emerges as a shrewd and politicized act, which drew attention to the legitimacy of his grievances. Denied control of any mausoleum for Æthelwulf, as the dead king's body had been moved since its burial at Steyning, Wimborne was significant as the burial place of Æthelwold's father, King Æthelred. Wimborne was arguably well connected with Æthelwold's line of the royal family, which is probably why it, rather than *Twinham*, received the Chronicler's

Northumbria (Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 51). It should also be added that, as the Vikings had shown to devastating effect during Alfred's reign, a seizure of an estate centre was more likely to be successful in late autumn or early winter when harvests were gathered in than in summer when supplies were low (see Richard P. Abels, 'English Logistics and Military Administration, 871–1066: The Impact of the Viking Wars', in *Military Aspects of Scandinavian Society in a European Perspective, AD 1–1300*, ed. by Anne N. Jørgensen and Birthe L. Clausen (Copenhagen: National Museum of Denmark, 1997), pp. 257–65 (pp. 258–59)). Although a post-June 900 date for Æthelwold's rebellion cannot be ruled out, a pre-June 900 date would seem to confirm the language of legitimacy inherent in the conflict, with Æthelwold taking advantage of circumstances, and like the delay before coronation in the circumstances of the accession of Æthelred II (admittedly for different reasons: see Simon D. Keynes, *The Diplomas of King Æthelred 'the Unready', 978–1016: A Study in their Use as Historical Evidence*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, 3rd series, 13 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 233, n. 7), this would probably explain the delay in Edward's coronation.

<sup>42</sup> For an expression of the sense of injustice of Pippin II after the loss of his right to succeed to Aquitaine in 838–39, see Astronomus, *Vita Hludovici Imperatoris*, ed. by E. Tremp, MGH Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum, 64 (Hannover: Hahn, 1995), ch. 61, pp. 536–38; *Son of Charlemagne: A Contemporary Life of Louis the Pious*, trans. by Allen Cabaniss (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1961), pp. 117–18 (trans.). For Liudolf's rebellion, see Widukind of Corbie, *Rerum Gestarum Saxoniarum libri tres*, ed. by H.-E. Lohmann and P. Hirsch, MGH Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum, 60 (Hannover: Hahn, 1935), III.9, p. 109. Asser, *De rebus*, ch. 12, ed. by Stevenson, pp. 9–10 (trans. by Keynes and Lapidge, p. 70).

attention as the main object of Æthelwold's attentions in Wessex.<sup>43</sup> The nunnery here had been founded in the early eighth century by a sister of King Ine, and thus had established connections with Alfred and Æthelred's branch of the royal house.<sup>44</sup> In referring to the rebellion of Liudolf of Suabia in the mid-tenth century, Stuart Airlie has highlighted the similarities of these actions with those of Æthelwold. Liudolf's actions were enacted within a political landscape at Saalfeld in Thuringia, a place resonant with family rebellion.<sup>45</sup> While Widukind's description of Saalfeld as a 'place of dark counsels' ('loco consiliis funesto')<sup>46</sup> may not be the first thing that leaps to mind as a description of Wimborne, it is worth adding that like Liudolf after him, Æthelwold may have used the site to attempt to forge a *different* path from that of Alfred's branch of the family, making use of family legitimacy but manipulating it in his own direction. After all, although an emphatically royal place, this was not Winchester, towards which the focus of Alfredian government and royal burial had been shifting during the course of the late ninth century.<sup>47</sup>

It is possible that the nun whom Æthelwold then seized, probably from Wimborne, was a member of a branch of the royal family whose control by Æthelwold demonstrated his legitimacy.<sup>48</sup> Margaret Clunies Ross has suggested that the nun

<sup>43</sup> For Wimborne's connections with Æthelred, see Patricia H. Coulstock, *The Collegiate Church of Wimborne Minster* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1993), pp. 62–63; Alfred P. Smyth, *King Alfred the Great* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 437; Barbara Yorke, *Nunneries and the Anglo-Saxon Royal Houses* (London: Continuum, 2003), p. 75.

<sup>44</sup> ASC 718, ed. by Earle and Plummer, I, 42–43 (trans. by Whitelock and others, p. 27). See Yorke, *Nunneries*, pp. 19–20 and Coulstock, *Collegiate Church of Wimborne Minster*, pp. 52–53.

<sup>45</sup> Stuart Airlie, review of Janet L. Nelson, *Rulers and Ruling Families in Early Medieval Europe: Alfred, Charles the Bald, and Others* (Aldershot: Ashgate Variorum, 1999), *Reviews in History*, 151 (2000), Institute of Historical Research Web site <<http://www.history.ac.uk/reviews/paper/airlieSt.html>>.

<sup>46</sup> Widukind, *Rerum Gestarum Saxonicarum*, III.9, p. 109. The translation is Karl Leyser's: 'Ritual, Ceremony and Gesture: Ottonian Germany', in his *Communications and Power in Medieval Europe: The Carolingian and Ottonian Centuries*, ed. by Timothy Reuter (London: Hambleton, 1994), pp. 189–213 (p. 201).

<sup>47</sup> Barbara Yorke, 'The Bishops of Winchester and the Kings of Wessex', *Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society*, 40 (1984), 61–70 (pp. 65–69).

<sup>48</sup> See Yorke, *Nunneries*, pp. 74–75. The assumption that the woman was a nun from Wimborne was made by John of Worcester: *The Chronicle of John of Worcester*, vol. II: *The Annals from 450 to 1066*, ed. by R. R. Darlington, P. McGurk, and J. Bray, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 356–57. Hart, *The Danelaw*, p. 512, n. 3; see also Sarah Foot, *Veiled Women*, vol. II: *Female Religious Communities in England, 871–1066* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), p. 236. Cf. Alex Woolf, 'View from the West: An Irish Perspective on West Saxon Dynastic

was taken by Æthelwold as a concubine, probably intended to show his authority over an important royal nunnery.<sup>49</sup> However, with the *Chronicle's* reference to the abduction (*geniman*) of this particular woman, it may even be wondered if later commentators were correct in assuming that Æthelwold had actually married her.<sup>50</sup> If marriage was intended or even enacted, this may have been because marrying one's own distant relation could draw the family group together and strengthen it, despite strong ecclesiastical disapproval. This was similarly important in King Eadwig's attempt to reunite with the kin of Æthelred, by marrying within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity in the mid-tenth century.<sup>51</sup>

Given Æthelwold's seniority over Edward, who seems to have been born at some point between c. 874 and 877,<sup>52</sup> it is suggestive of the level of control which Alfred may have had over the *ætheling* that Æthelwold needed the occasion of the old king's death in order to gain a (?new) wife, and a reaction against Wimborne's association with Æthelwold's branch of the royal family may have been behind the evident low profile of the nunnery at Wimborne after 900.<sup>53</sup> A clause in Alfred's lawcode, presumably made with one eye upon Carolingian experience (and the would-be Carolingian experience of eighth-century Mercia), had controlled the position of nuns in the kingdom.<sup>54</sup> This is perhaps alluded to by the *Chronicle's*

Practice', in *Edward the Elder*, ed. by Hill and Rumble, pp. 89–101 (pp. 98–99), who tentatively suggests Alfred's daughter Ælfgifu, Abbess of Shaftesbury, as a candidate for the abducted woman. As will be shown below, the geography of the campaign suggests that Æthelwold's arrival at Shaftesbury is unlikely, albeit not implausible.

<sup>49</sup> Margaret Clunies Ross, 'Concubinage in Anglo-Saxon England', *Past and Present*, 108 (1985), 3–34 (p. 32).

<sup>50</sup> John of Worcester, *Chronicle*, s.a. 901, pp. 356–57. Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum: History of the English*, ed. and trans. by Diana Greenway, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), V.14, pp. 298–99.

<sup>51</sup> Barbara Yorke, '[Bishop] Æthelwold and the Politics of the Tenth Century', in *Bishop Æthelwold: His Career and Influence*, ed. by Barbara Yorke (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1988), pp. 65–88 (pp. 76–77). This is considered in depth in S. Jayakumar, 'The Politics of the English Kingdom, c.955–c.978' (unpublished DPhil dissertation, Oxford University, 2001), pp. 23–27. Eadwig's marriage, probably to the sister of Ealdorman Æthelweard, would have fallen well within the prohibited degrees of kinship; for these, see Jack Goody, *The Development of the Family and Marriage in Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 134–46.

<sup>52</sup> Yorke, 'Edward as *Ætheling*', pp. 25–26.

<sup>53</sup> Yorke, *Nunneries*, pp. 74–75. See ASC 962 A, ed. by Earle and Plummer, I, 114 (trans. by Whitelock and others, p. 75).

<sup>54</sup> Alfred §8: *Laws of the Earliest English Kings*, ed. by F. L. Attenborough (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922), pp. 68–69; *EHD* I, 410–11. See also the eighth-century report

reference to the woman's seizure 'against the king's permission and contrary to the bishops' orders' ('butan þæs cinges leafe 7 ofer þara bisceopa gebodu'). Under such circumstances, it would be logical if the woman had been placed in the nunnery for familial control.

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle's* reference to the woman's seizure is the second of two allusions to Æthelwold's lack of permission. It also records that he did not have the permission of the King or his counsellors in his actions; it is perhaps telling that the later West Saxon ('A') manuscript of the *Chronicle* rewords what had been expressed in its exemplar (as recorded in the other versions), reflecting the importance attached to this issue.<sup>55</sup> However, what the *Chronicle* does not acknowledge is that this was precisely because by his actions Æthelwold did not need permission. Like the disgruntled *ætheling* Edmund in Mercia a century later,<sup>56</sup> and Charles the Bald's similarly discontented son in 862, marriage without royal permission seems to have been a means of making a statement of independence.<sup>57</sup>

Nonetheless, for Æthelwold, Wimborne was arguably as important as a royal estate as a royal nunnery. After all, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* referred to it, along with *Twinham*, as *þone ham*, a term which seems to have highlighted their significance as estate centres, places which could prove logistically beneficial for the

of the papal legates to Pope Hadrian: *Alcuini Epistolae*, in *Epistolae Karolini Aevi*, vol. III, ed. by Ernest Dümmler, MGH Epistolae, 5 (Hannover: Weidmann, 1895), p. 25. For discussion of the control of royal women, see Janet L. Nelson, 'Women at the Court of Charlemagne: A Case of Monstrous Regiment?', in *Medieval Queenship*, ed. by John Carmi Parsons (Stroud: Sutton, 1993), pp. 43–60 (pp. 57–58), and P. Stafford, 'Sons and Mothers: Family Politics in the Early Middle Ages', in *Medieval Women*, ed. by Derek Baker (Oxford: Blackwell, 1978), pp. 96–97.

<sup>55</sup> *ASC* 901 (= 899/900), ed. by Earle and Plummer, I, 92–93 (trans. by Whitelock and others, p. 59).

<sup>56</sup> *ASC* 1015 CDE, ed. by Earle and Plummer, I, 146 (trans. by Whitelock and others, p. 94); Pauline Stafford, 'The Reign of Æthelred II: A Study in Limitations on Royal Policy and Action', in *Ethelred the Unready: Papers from the Millenary Conference*, ed. by D. H. Hill, British Archaeological Reports, British Series, 59 (Oxford: BAR, 1978), pp. 15–45 (p. 36); Charles Insley, 'Politics and Kinship in Early Eleventh-Century Mercia', *Midland History*, 25 (2000), 28–42 (p. 34).

<sup>57</sup> For the case of the marriage of Young Charles in 862 (although at the encouragement of another noble, Stephen, son of Count Hugh), see *AB*, 862, ed. by Waitz, p. 58 (trans. by Nelson, pp. 99–100); see Janet L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald* (London: Longman, 1992), pp. 201–02. See generally S. Kalifa, 'Singuliarités matrimoniales chez les anciens germains: le rapt et le droit de la femme a disposer d'elle-même', *Revue historique de droit français*, 48 (1970), 199–225. For a non-royal abduction, see *ASC* 1046 C, ed. by Earle and Plummer, I, 164 (trans. by Whitelock and others, p. 109).

attackers.<sup>58</sup> By the eleventh century, Wimborne was recorded in Domesday Book as providing a 'Farm of One Night', at the centre of a cluster of estates in east Dorset, the name of one of whose elements, Wimborne St Giles, showed some continuity of connection.<sup>59</sup> While being mindful of circular arguments in assuming Wimborne's importance precisely because it was seized by Æthelwold, given the alienation of lands from what was evidently a large land unit and its reorganization in the tenth and/or eleventh centuries, it is likely that the organization of the estate focussed upon Wimborne had been of some antiquity for West Saxon rulers.<sup>60</sup>

Wimborne was not amongst that body of lands in Alfred's will which Patrick Wormald has suggested were designated for family control.<sup>61</sup> It would therefore be logical that Wimborne was one of a group of lands which customarily passed from king to king. Indicative of the existence of such a group of lands are the similarities between the hidage assessments for many West Saxon shires in the early tenth-century Burghal Hidage and the total hidage assessments in Domesday Book. This may show that the area of lands excluded from such calculations — that is, unhidated lands — roughly equated at both the beginning of the tenth century and in the mid-eleventh century respectively.<sup>62</sup> As the night's farm estates recorded in Domesday Book were not assessed in hides as late as the eleventh century, such a body of lands may never have been assessed in hides. In view of its absence from the booklands of Alfred's will, a good case can be made for Wimborne having been part

<sup>58</sup> Abels, 'English Logistics and Military Administration', pp. 258–59.

<sup>59</sup> *Domesday Book: Dorset*, ed. by C. Thorn and F. Thorn (Chichester: Phillimore, 1983), 1:3 (fol. 75b).

<sup>60</sup> See Lavelle, 'Farm of One Night', pp. 65–66. Cf. Coulstock, *Collegiate Church of Wimborne Minster*, pp. 63–64, for an interesting, though not altogether convincing, case for the royal *tun* seized by Æthelwold being a mile north-west in nearby Kingston Lacey, and thus entirely separate from the nunnery. For the topography of Wimborne, see C. C. Taylor, 'Wimborne Minster', *Proceedings of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society*, 89 (1968 for 1967), 168–70, and K. J. Penn, *Historic Towns in Dorset*, Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society Monograph Series, 1 (Dorchester: Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society, 1980), pp. 121–25. See also J. Bourne, 'Kingston Place-Names: An Interim Report', *Journal of the English Place-Name Society*, 20 (1987–88), 13–37 (pp. 28–29).

<sup>61</sup> Wormald, 'On þa Wæpnedhealfē'.

<sup>62</sup> Nicholas P. Brooks, 'The Administrative Background to the Burghal Hidage', and David A. Hinton, 'The Fortifications and their Shires', in *The Defence of Wessex: The Burghal Hidage and Anglo-Saxon Fortifications*, ed. by Alexander R. Rumble and David Hill (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), pp. 128–50 and pp. 151–59; P. H. Sawyer, *From Roman Britain to Norman England* (London: Methuen, 1978), pp. 227–28.

of the customary body of estates. Therefore we can hardly be surprised that Æthelwold was not bequeathed land at Wimborne by Alfred. If it was not bookland but was customarily royal, we might also see that his seizure of the *tun* here indicated a seizure of a place which was demonstrative of kingship.<sup>63</sup> To compare a Carolingian case, for Charles the Bald's nephew, Pippin II, visits to royal *villae* were a means of reasserting his legitimacy in the disputed kingdom of Aquitaine in 847–48.<sup>64</sup>

Arriving at a royal estate meant more than simply grabbing a few sacks of wheat and slaughtering a few cows to feed hungry warriors. *Feorm* — render and entertainment — was an integral part of Anglo-Saxon kingship, reflected in Alfred's record of the early West Saxon King Ine's law.<sup>65</sup> *Feorm* was what was owed to a king from royal lands, and it was this — effectively encompassing entertainment, feasting, and all that was joyful about aristocratic society — that allowed the bonds of society to mesh together.<sup>66</sup> By seizing this estate centre, therefore (and here too, it is surely significant therefore that Wimborne, not *Twinham*, receives the *Chronicle's* attention), Æthelwold had seized the royal rights to control of the surrounding area and, for the moment, demonstrated Edward's inability to act as a

<sup>63</sup> Foot, *Veiled Women*, II, 236, suggests that the *ASC's* record that the seizure of Wimborne was 'against the will of the king and his councillors' emphasizes the fact that Æthelwold did not possess the *tun*.

<sup>64</sup> *AB* 849, ed. by Waitz, p. 37 (trans. by Nelson, p. 68) refers to Pippin II 'moving about in Aquitaine' (*in Aquitania vagantem*). For Pippin's movements in 847–48, see Jane Martindale, 'Charles the Bald and the Government of the Kingdom of Aquitaine', in *Charles the Bald: Court and Kingdom*, ed. by Margaret Gibson and Janet L. Nelson, British Archaeological Reports, International Series, 101 (Oxford: BAR, 1981), pp. 109–35 (p. 133). Roger Collins, 'Pippin I', in *ibid.* pp. 363–89, refers to movements east of the Garonne and centred on Toulouse. See here E. Ewig, 'Résidence et capitale pendant le Haut Moyen Âge', *Revue Historique*, 230 (1963), 25–72 (pp. 67–68).

<sup>65</sup> Ine §70.1 (*Laws of the Earliest English Kings*, ed. by Attenborough, pp. 58–59; *EHD* I, 406): from ten hides (over an unspecified period) to the king?: ten vats of honey, three hundred loaves, twelve 'ambers' of Welsh ale, thirty 'ambers' of clear ale, two full-grown cows or ten wethers, ten geese, twenty hens, ten cheeses, an 'amber' full of butter, five salmon, twenty ?pounds of fodder, one hundred eels.

<sup>66</sup> Alban Gautier, *Le Festin dans l'Angleterre anglo-saxonne (V<sup>e</sup>–XI<sup>e</sup> siècle)* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2006); Hugh Magennis, *Anglo-Saxon Appetites: Food and Drink and their Consumption in Old English and Related Literature* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1999), pp. 17–50; L. Oliver, 'Cyninges Fedesl: The King's Feeding in Æthelberht, ch.12', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 27 (1998), 31–40. Note also the comments of Janet Nelson, 'Charlemagne and the Paradoxes of Power', on *De Villis*, above, p. 39.

good lord. The implicit codes of Anglo-Saxon warfare — indeed contemporary European warfare — were therefore being explicitly used.<sup>67</sup>

Once more, Ottonian Germany should be brought into the comparative frame. In a posthumously published paper, Karl Leyser remarked on the significance of feasting as part of the complex language of political ritual in Ottonian rebellion. Just as the act of feasting was an expression of rulership, this action was usurped at Saalfeld in 939 by Henry, the rebellious brother of the newly crowned Otto I, as well as in 953–54 by Otto's discontented son, Liudolf, and his *conjuraciones*.<sup>68</sup> If Wimborne was one of the more important of the royal estates in western Wessex providing *feorm*, such appropriation was evidently important as a part of Æthelwold's actions.

### *Æthelwold's Strategies and Support: Wessex*

Although recent work by Guy Halsall should remind us of the dangers of a purely strategic focus on early medieval warfare, it is nonetheless fruitful to consider Æthelwold's actions themselves in a broader, strategic context.<sup>69</sup> For example, the order of the *Chronicle's* entry means that Æthelwold's arrival at *Twinham* is placed after the seizure of Wimborne. However, the *Chronicle's* allusion to Æthelwold's exit on horseback (an activity often associated with Viking activities in ninth-century *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* entries<sup>70</sup>) would suggest that he subsequently escaped over land. Therefore, it seems more likely that he arrived at *Twinham* first: subsequent events are recorded by the *Chronicle* as having taken place in Wimborne. Indeed, writing in the twelfth century from a version of the *Chronicle*, John of Worcester records events in this order.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>67</sup> See here Guy R. Halsall, *Warfare and Society in the Barbarian West, 450–900* (London: Routledge, 2003), Chapter 7, on early medieval campaigns, esp. pp. 137–40.

<sup>68</sup> Widukind, *Rerum Gestarum Saxoniarum*, II.15, p. 79; III.9, p. 109. Leyser, 'Ritual, Ceremony and Gesture', p. 201; Karl J. Leyser, *Rule and Conflict in an Early Medieval Society* (London: Arnold, 1979), p. 20. See also Gerd Althoff, 'Zur Frage nach der Organisation von Sächsischen coniurationes', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 16 (1982), 129–42.

<sup>69</sup> Halsall, *Warfare and Society*, pp. 6–7.

<sup>70</sup> Although horseback armies were not limited to the use of Vikings, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is understandably preoccupied with Viking mobility. For references to mounted Viking forces in England and on the continent, see *ASC* 866, 870, 871, 881, 885, 893, 895, ed. by Earle and Plummer, I, 68–86 (trans. by Whitelock and others, pp. 45–57).

<sup>71</sup> John of Worcester, *Chronicle*, s.a. 901 (pp. 356–57).

While from a defensive point of view, Wimborne was probably useful in part because of the strong walls which segregated the nunnery in the eighth century, described (albeit stereotypically) in Rudolph's *Vita Sanctae Leobae*,<sup>72</sup> Wimborne also held a strategic value. It was at a key point in the West Saxon kingdom, close to important Roman roads which led directly westward to Dorchester, north to Salisbury, and — perhaps significantly — not directly to Winchester.<sup>73</sup> It was at a crossing point of the Rivers Allen and Stour, the latter of which, if navigable (especially in late autumn/early winter when the river's plain is prone to flooding), may have been a means of travel — albeit slow — from *Twinham* to Wimborne.<sup>74</sup> Wimborne was the southernmost point by which Æthelwold could control access to the western half of the kingdom. Even if he did not intend to take over the whole of Wessex, one may wonder whether his plans included a division of the kingdom, something which, as discussed above, was a serious concern. While noting a late ninth-century gravitation towards Winchester, Barbara Yorke has remarked on the evident preferences of Alfred's predecessors for the diocese of Sherborne (Dorset)<sup>75</sup> (a trend which may contextualize Æthelbald's relegation of his father at Steyning), and indeed there may have been Alfredian interests in the western part of the kingdom.<sup>76</sup> Perhaps as with the Vikings' attempts to cut off the eastern half of the kingdom through seizing the royal estate centre of Chippenham (Wilts.) in 878,<sup>77</sup> Æthelwold's actions may have been intended to reopen such

<sup>72</sup> Rudolph, *Vita S. Leobae*, ch. 2, ed. by G. Waitz, MGH Scriptores, 15.1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1887), p. 123, discussed in John Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 198–99. Blair (p. 331) also compares Wimborne with the use of nearby Wareham by the 'Great Viking Army' in 876, which may have functioned as a base because of its walls.

<sup>73</sup> I. D. Margary, *Roman Roads in Britain*, 2nd edn (London: John Baker, 1967), pp. 106–10.

<sup>74</sup> Although the downstream parts of the River Stour are not considered, for a discussion on the post-Conquest significance of the navigability of rivers, see E. T. Jones (with response by J. Langdon), 'River Navigation in Medieval England', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 26 (2000), 60–82.

<sup>75</sup> Yorke, 'Bishops of Winchester and the Kings of Wessex', p. 64.

<sup>76</sup> For Alfred's western tendencies, voluntary or otherwise — Alfred's Somerset exile, hunting in Cornwall, and Asser's promotion to Sherborne — (although it should be said that these were all issues stressed by Asser, who was by no means an unbiased commentator), see Asser, *De rebus*, chs 53, 74, 81, ed. by Stevenson, pp. 41, 55–56, 67–68 (trans. by Keynes and Lapidge, pp. 83, 89, 96–97).

<sup>77</sup> For the seizure of Chippenham as an attempt to divide the kingdom, see Yorke, *Wessex in the Early Middle Ages*, p. 99.

fissures, to become ruler of a significant part of the kingdom. This may have been the area where his father's interests had lain before the agreement was made with King Æthelberht, as recorded in the first part of Alfred's will.<sup>78</sup>

Æthelwold's sole appearance in a charter's witness list perhaps reflects such potential geographical fracture lines. Although recognized as having elements of modification, the undated Malmesbury charter in which Æthelwold appears stems from an authentic basis, recording the grant by Alfred of four hides at Chelworth, near Crudwell (Wilts.), to a layman by the name of Dudig.<sup>79</sup> If the records of those at assemblies reflect interests of local nobles, it may be significant that a charter stemming from an assembly held at Malmesbury in western Wiltshire was the only occasion of the survival of an attestation by Æthelwold. It is perhaps instructive here too that Æthelwold's 902 assault on Wessex may also have taken advantage of this geography. Although, as will be shown, there was by then a wider agenda at play than Æthelwold's claim to the throne: Æthelwold's point of entry into Wessex from Mercia was also comparatively far west, at Cricklade.<sup>80</sup>

Nonetheless, that does not detract from the probability that Æthelwold's support base suffered under years of Alfredian dominance at court. Barbara Yorke, for one, has drawn attention to Æthelhelm and Æthelwold's comparative absence in the subscription lists of the (admittedly small) corpus of Alfredian charters, in comparison to Edward's more regular appearance.<sup>81</sup> However, to turn this suggestion on its head, *any* support base for Æthelwold, however small, would have meant problems for Edward. As Reuter suggested, rebellion often used a member of the ruling family as a focus,<sup>82</sup> a matter which seems to have been just as apparent for Carolingian rulers as for Ottonians, as demonstrated by the Neustrian Franks' appeal to Charles the Bald's brother, Louis the German, or Aquitanian support for

<sup>78</sup> *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, ed. by Sawyer, no. 1507. *Charters of the New Minster*, ed. by Miller, p. 4 (trans. by Keynes and Lapidge, p. 174). See Smyth, *King Alfred the Great*, p. 437, for the suggestion that because Æthelred I had been buried in Wimborne, the men of Dorset may have once held particular loyalty to his father.

<sup>79</sup> *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, ed. by Sawyer, no. 356. See note 19, above.

<sup>80</sup> *ASC* 904 A; 905 BCD (= 902–03), ed. by Earle and Plummer, I, 92–93 (trans. by Whitelock and others, p. 59).

<sup>81</sup> Simon D. Keynes, *An Atlas of Attestations in Anglo-Saxon Charters, c.670–1066*, working edn (Cambridge University, 1995), table 21. Yorke, 'Edward as Ætheling', p. 31.

<sup>82</sup> Reuter, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages*, pp. 199–200.

a newly escaped Pippin II against the rule of Louis the Younger, son of Louis the German, in 854.<sup>83</sup>

When considering Æthelwold's support base, it may also be observed that while Alfred appears to have been effective at controlling the lives of royal women within royal monasteries, it marks a noticeable difference from the Carolingian practice that he does not appear to have tried to place his nephews into a monastery out of harm's way.<sup>84</sup> Despite founding a monastery at Athelney (Somerset) and being unable to people it with anything but young boys and an irascible German abbot,<sup>85</sup> it may seem curious that such a potential opportunity to ensure that succession was not disrupted was not taken up. Beyond the fact that with rare exceptions such as Athelney, Wessex did not boast a monastic infrastructure comparable with ninth-century Francia, two cases may show that Æthelwold was still too important within the family to be kept off the scene in this way. One is that of Wulfhere, the ealdorman of Wiltshire who was deposed from his office after he 'deserted without permission' ('sine licentia dereliquit') in (probably) 878, but only finally lost his lands around 900. This may indicate, as Barbara Yorke hazards, that he had supported Æthelwold in 899–900, as well as, conceivably, in 878, when Alfred's exile had left the path open for the Vikings to place a 'puppet' on the throne from another branch of the West Saxon family.<sup>86</sup> However, there are hints at some limits in the capacity for action against Æthelwold's party that, even then, complete confiscation may not have been within Edward's grasp, as Wulfhere's grandson appears to have been able to bequeath estates.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>83</sup> For the appeal by the Neustrians of West Francia to Charles's brother, Louis the German, see *Annales Fuldenses*, ed. by F. Kurze, MGH Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum, 7 (Hannover: Hahn, 1891), s.a. 858, pp. 49–50 (text); *The Annals of Fulda*, trans. by Timothy Reuter (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), pp. 41–42 (trans.); see Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 187–88. For ninth-century rebellion, see Airlie, 'Semper fideles?', and MacLean, *Kingship and Politics*, pp. 20–21. For Pippin II, see *AB* 854, ed. by Waitz, p. 44 (trans. by Nelson, pp. 78–79).

<sup>84</sup> I gratefully thank Rachel Stone for drawing my attention to this. For a recent consideration of the monastic 'fridge', in which a troublesome family member could be placed without the need for execution, see Mayke de Jong, 'Monastic Prisoners or Opting Out? Political Coercion and Honour in the Frankish Kingdoms', in *Topographies of Power in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. by Mayke de Jong and Frans Theuvs (Leiden: Brill, 2001), pp. 291–328.

<sup>85</sup> Asser, *De rebus*, chs 92–94, ed. by Stevenson, pp. 79–81 (trans. by Keynes and Lapidge, pp. 102–03).

<sup>86</sup> Yorke, 'Edward as Ætheling', p. 36.

<sup>87</sup> Yorke, 'Edward as Ætheling', p. 36, citing *Anglo-Saxon Charters*, ed. by Sawyer, no. 1533 (AD 931x939).

The second case is the later importance of Æthelred's kin. It is unlikely that Ælflæd, Edward's second wife, was the *ætheling* Æthelhelm's daughter (and thus Edward's second cousin), as has been suggested in some quarters,<sup>88</sup> but King Eadwig's marriage in the mid-tenth century was politically sensitive because of the significance of marrying into this branch of the family. As Shashi Jayakumar has pointed out, hostility to the marriage was due to more than Dunstan's disapproval but showed the reappearance of the tensions within the royal house because these tensions were those of immensely powerful factions. The marriage faced direct opposition from the side who had fought with Edward at the Holme, represented by the Queen Mother, Eadgifu, daughter of Sighelm, the ealdorman of Kent, who had died at the battle.<sup>89</sup> Given that in the late tenth century Ealdorman Æthelweard was able to write to his distant cousin, Matilda, Abbess of Essen, of his descent from Æthelred, the ability of Æthelred's kin — even if not necessarily Æthelwold's descendents — to retain friends and influence people across Europe seems remarkable.<sup>90</sup>

Æthelwold had a measure of success in Wessex because he had made a stand and a challenge which manipulated the language of political legitimacy. The language of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* may reflect this, not only by reference to Æthelwold's followers, but also by reference to the reportage of Æthelwold's declaration 'that he would either live there or die there' (*þæt he wolde oþþe ðær libban oððe þær licgean*) and that Æthelwold 'had barricaded all the gates against him [i.e. Edward]' (*Ʒ he hæfde ealle ða gatuforworhte inn to him*).<sup>91</sup> The act of barricading

<sup>88</sup> Pauline Stafford, *Queens, Concubines and Dowagers: The King's Wife in the Early Middle Ages* (London: Batsford, 1983), p. 43. Marc A. Meyer, 'The Queen's "Demesne" in Later Anglo-Saxon England', in *The Culture of Christendom: Essays in Medieval History in Commemoration of Denis L. T. Bethell*, ed. by Marc A. Meyer (London: Hambledon, 1993), pp. 75–113 (p. 91, n. 63). Although neither work provides an explicit reference, the relevant passage is William of Malmesbury's statement that Ælflæd was daughter of *Ethelmi comitis*: William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum: The History of the English Kings*, vol. 1, ed. by R. A. B. Mynors, with R. M. Thomson and M. Winterbottom, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), II.126, pp. 198–201. Cf. Yorke, 'Æthelwold and the Politics of the Tenth Century', p. 70, who suggests instead that William of Malmesbury's reference was to the ealdorman of Wiltshire, whose death is recorded in the *ASC* entry for 897. See also Yorke, 'Edward as *Ætheling*', pp. 33–34.

<sup>89</sup> Jayakumar, 'Politics of the English Kingdom', pp. 23–27. See above, p. 63.

<sup>90</sup> Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, pp. 1–2.

<sup>91</sup> However, cf. Stephen Baxter, 'The Earls of Mercia and their Commended Men in the Eleventh Century', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 23 (2001), 23–46 (p. 30), who stresses the small number of Æthelwold's followers.

gates resonates with the *Chronicle's* famous account of the rebellion of Cyneheard against his kinsman King Cynewulf under its entry for 757, which had resulted in the King's death. Once in the royal *byrig* at *Meretun*, and faced with reprisals from the followers of the dead King Cynewulf, Cyneheard had 'locked the gates against them [or 'on themselves']' (*Ʒ hi him þa gatu to belocen hæfdon*). Such an action was an evident statement, seen as rebellion by its reporters, obsessed as they were with legitimacy at the Alfredian court in adding it to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, but presumably perceived as legitimate by its protagonists.<sup>92</sup> Although the Cynewulf/Cyneheard episode is deservedly known as a poetic demonstration of Anglo-Saxon lordship,<sup>93</sup> under these circumstances it is interesting that this was also a statement of intent through action. Similarly, the bold statement is echoed in the 'C' manuscript of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* in its account (from a hostile perspective) of the rebellion of Earl Godwine and his sons in 1051–52; here the men of southern England 'all said that they would live and die with him' (*þa cwædon ealle þæt hi mid him woldon licgan Ʒ lybban*).<sup>94</sup>

In 786, Cyneheard had been the aggressive *ætheling* who killed the incumbent King, but by reflecting Cyneheard's actions in his record of Æthelwold's own actions the Chronicler shows Æthelwold's bid for kingship along 'traditional' West Saxon lines. Like Cynewulf's men in 786, Edward had to make an appropriate response to a political gesture: Æthelwold was forcing Edward's hand and the only reactions open to him were to counter Æthelwold's proclaimed legitimacy by meeting him with violence, in order to force him to submit, or to come to agreement. When Edward did respond, it could be said that Æthelwold subverted such principles, neither submitting, coming to agreement, nor meeting Edward in battle.<sup>95</sup> In the circumstances, such an inversion of expected norms could be effective in itself.

<sup>92</sup> Janet Bateley, 'The Compilation of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle 60 BC to AD 890: Vocabulary as Evidence', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 64 (1980 for 1978), 93–129.

<sup>93</sup> Stephen D. White, 'Kinship and Lordship in Early Medieval England: The Story of Siegebert, Cynewulf and Cyneheard', *Viator*, 20 (1989), 1–18.

<sup>94</sup> *ASC* 1052 C, ed. by Earle and Plummer, I, 178 (trans. by Whitelock and others, p. 123). Stephen Baxter's paper 'MSC and the Politics of Mid-Eleventh Century England', *English Historical Review*, 122 (2007), 1189–1227, is the most recent appraisal of the 'C' Chronicler's perspective.

<sup>95</sup> For references to rebellion, see note 4, above. For the use of violent gestures and their reciprocation, see Althoff, *Family, Friends and Followers*, pp. 151–52.

*Æthelwold's Strategies and Support: Outside Wessex*

Nonetheless, from a West Saxon viewpoint, Æthelwold's dramatic stand at Wimborne still ended with what seems to have been a rout. After this, his actions no longer resonated with a sense of legitimacy in Wessex, despite, or perhaps because of, his evident power in Northumbria. While tenth-century Anglo-Saxon sources hardly mirror the diversity of views which are found across the Carolingian realms in the mid-ninth century, it should still be noted that, in contrast to Pippin II of Aquitaine, whose press varied considerably,<sup>96</sup> Æthelwold is given very short shrift in the West Saxon sources after 900.<sup>97</sup> If, as I have argued, Æthelwold had invoked West Saxon legitimacy in 899–900 (even if Alfred's policies had narrowed Æthelwold's scope for legitimate action), it is a noticeable and presumably significant contrast that after this point until the record of his death in 902, he was not referred to as an *ætheling* in the text of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*.

Æthelwold's power in Northumbria appears to have been real enough in the context of events, however. Opportunist or not, this was a remarkable achievement,<sup>98</sup> an achievement which Ealdorman Æthelweard may have tacitly acknowledged. Despite the apparent need for sensitivity, as he avoids mention of Æthelwold's rebellion, Æthelweard's *Chronicon* is the only source which discusses the circumstances of rebellion in Northumbria prior to Alfred's death which may have led to

<sup>96</sup> For example, the East Frankish Annals of Fulda are critical of Charles the Bald's policies as he 'claimed Aquitaine as if belonging to his portion of the kingdom by right [and] made difficulties for his nephew Pippin by frequent attacks' ('Aquitaniā quasi ad partem regni sui uire pertinentem affectans Pippino nepoti sui molestus efficitur eumque crebris incursionibus infestans'): *Annales Fuldenses* 843, ed. by Kurze, p. 34 (trans. by Reuter, p. 22). Cf. the *Annals of St Bertin*, which deliberately avoids granting Pippin II any royal title. *AB* 844, ed. by Waitz, p. 30 (trans. by Nelson, p. 58 and n. 8).

<sup>97</sup> This may also stretch to Norse tradition, if Alfred Smyth is correct in equating the *Adalbrigt* defeated by Cnut I of York in the *Jomsvikings Saga* with our Æthelwold: *Scandinavian York and Dublin: The History and Archaeology of Two Related Viking Kingdoms*, vol. 1 (Dublin: Templekieran Press, 1975), pp. 48–51, citing *Jómsvíkinga Saga: The Saga of the Jomsvikings*, ed. by N. F. Blake (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1962), pp. 6–7. See Hart, *The Danelaw*, p. 513. In his later biography, *King Alfred the Great*, p. 436, Smyth is more circumspect in his interpretation of Æthelwold's kingship, stressing Northumbrian support for a West Saxon claim.

<sup>98</sup> Hart, *The Danelaw*, pp. 512–13. C. E. Blunt, 'Northumbrian Coins in the Name of Alwaldus', *British Numismatic Journal*, 55 (1985), 192–94; cf. F. M. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 3rd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 322, n. 2.

Æthelwold's success.<sup>99</sup> The fact that the *Annals of Ulster* record Æthelwold's death (albeit under the entry for 913), referring to him as 'king of the Saxons of the North' ('ri Saxan Tuaiscirt'), also gives some indication of the esteem in which he may have been held.<sup>100</sup> In his recent study of the Northumbrian kingdom, David Rollason has commented with something akin to disappointment on the manner in which Æthelwold seems to have been interested in using Northumbria only as a launchpad for campaigns to recover Wessex.<sup>101</sup> While this is a fair point, I cannot help but think here of the grand tradition of exiled royal family members, whose presence in courts across early medieval Europe could lend a sense of legitimacy to warfare perpetrated against one's neighbours: Alfred may have pushed forward the agenda for a *gens Anglorum*, but the rivalries of the so-called Heptarchy were surprisingly alive at the beginning of the tenth century.

Of course, it would be over-optimistic to hope to comprehend why Æthelwold seems to have been so successful at rousing forces to his side. They may not have helped his cause in terms of legitimacy but, as with Lothar and Pippin II's employment of Vikings in the Carolingian middle kingdom and Aquitaine respectively, and Liudolf and Conrad's good relations with Magyar families around 954, perhaps such support helped to even out a political imbalance (and it should also be acknowledged that hiring Vikings was not a policy which was confined to rebels and renegades in the early medieval West).<sup>102</sup> If Æthelwold thereby had to tacitly

<sup>99</sup> Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 51. However, it should be noted that Æthelweard's account of the Battle of the Holme includes a tantalizing, self-consciously classicizing reference: 'Two princes of the English, soft of beard, then left the air they breathed ever before, and entered a strange region below the waves of Acheron' ('Ast duo Anglorum lanugine clitones tenera linquunt ibi auras suetas, sub Acherontas peregrinam temptant regionem undas') (Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 52). This was at the equivalent point of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle's* record of the deaths of Æthelwold and another English renegade (for whom see below, p. 76). For the expulsion of family memory, see Patrick J. Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance: Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), especially pp. 134–57.

<sup>100</sup> *The Annals of Ulster (to A.D. 1131)*, ed. by S. Mac Airt and G. Mac Niocaill (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1983), pp. 360–61.

<sup>101</sup> David Rollason, *Northumbria 500–1100: Creation and Destruction of a Kingdom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 216–17.

<sup>102</sup> Widukind, *Rerum Gestarum Saxonicarum*, III.32, pp. 118–19; see Karl Leyser, 'The Battle at the Lech: A Study in Tenth-Century Warfare', *History*, 50 (1965), 1–25 (pp. 9–10). For Lothar's relationship with Vikings, see *AB* 841, ed. by Waitz, p. 26 (trans. by Nelson, p. 50); for Pippin's employment of Vikings in ninth-century Francia, see *AB* 857, 864, ed. by Waitz, pp. 47, 67 (trans. by Nelson, pp. 84, 111). For the notion that Pippin's employment of Vikings in

acknowledge the failure of his West Saxon bid for power, his actions now indicated an altogether different strategy. This was implicitly different because, whether or not Æthelwold employed Vikings in his earlier foray into Dorset, it is surely significant that the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* did not record them: from 901 onwards, the Viking connection was explicit.

The perspective taken by the *Annals of St Neots* also warrants mention here: although it may be a gloss on the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*'s record that the army in Northumbria made Æthelwold their king, the record of Æthelwold as 'king of the pagans' ('rex paganorum'), and 'king of the Danes' ('rex danorum') provides a notable acknowledgement of Æthelwold's position in eastern England.<sup>103</sup> This verdict on Æthelwold may have been inherently hostile, but it reflects the manner in which Æthelwold had moved on to an altogether larger political stage. It is perhaps instructive here to note that the non-West Saxon versions of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* record Æthelwold's actions upon this stage from a 'national' perspective. While the 'A' version of the *Chronicle* does not record Æthelwold's position as a king in Northumbria or the submission to him in Essex in 901–02, other manuscripts are more candid.<sup>104</sup> Essex was a frontier territory between the West Saxon kingdom and the Danelaw, and though it may not have been under the direct control of the West Saxon king,<sup>105</sup> Æthelwold's actions could still have come as a major blow.

However, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* also indicates that the events of 902 — an advance from East Anglia across Mercia into Wessex — were not entirely orchestrated by Æthelwold but also reflect a wider attempt to capitalize on the situation across England following the death of Alfred the Great. As Sir Frank Stenton observed, Byrhtsig son of Byrhtnoth, who was recorded with Æthelwold amongst the roll of Anglo-Scandinavian dead after the Battle of the Holme, may have been

Toulouse in 864 smacked of desperation, see Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, pp. 202–03. See Simon Coupland, 'From Poachers to Gamekeepers: Scandinavian Warlords and Carolingian Kings', *Early Medieval Europe*, 7 (1998), 85–114, for a discussion of royal policies of employing Vikings in late Carolingian Francia.

<sup>103</sup> *Annals of St Neots*, ed. by Dumville and Lapidge, p. 104. Cf. *AB* 864, ed. by Waitz, p. 67 (trans. by Nelson, p. 111 and n. 3), which refers to Pippin II as having 'joined company with the Northmen and lived like one of them' ('se Normannis coniungit et ritum eorum servat').

<sup>104</sup> *ASC* 901 (=899/900); 904 A, 905 BCD (= 902–03), ed. by Earle and Plummer, I, 92–93 (trans. by Whitelock and others, p. 59).

<sup>105</sup> Richard P. Abels, *Alfred the Great: War, Kingship and Culture in Anglo-Saxon England* (London: Longman, 1998), p. 164.

a dispossessed descendent of the Mercian royal family.<sup>106</sup> If so, it is therefore surely significant here that Mercia was also a target in the 902 campaign.<sup>107</sup>

The defences at Cricklade, a key crossing point across the Thames, may have held firm against the attackers, as there is no record of its destruction in the *Chronicle's* account,<sup>108</sup> but nonetheless Edward's Wessex was penetrated by a hostile force, as the *Chronicle's* record of ravaging around Braydon (Wilts.) showed.<sup>109</sup> The resulting manoeuvres and countermanoeuvres showed that this attacking Anglo-Scandinavian force controlled territory which could be struck at as a response. Later events in Edward's conquest of the Danelaw would show that this was an important change in the manner in which Anglo-Scandinavian politics manifested themselves: tenth-century strategies arguably focussed upon conquering specific places under Danish control in order to gain control of territory.<sup>110</sup> Nonetheless, although Æthelwold was seen as a renegade by the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, his presence in 901–02 — as well as the presence of the putative dispossessed members of the Mercian royal family — may have lent the Viking coalition in England a legitimacy that they may otherwise have not held. The conflict had arguably become a territorial one. The death of Æthelwold along with many Anglo-Scandinavian kings and nobles seems to have obscured the possibility that the campaign did not go to plan for the West Saxon forces, and that, as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* acknowledges, the Anglo-Scandinavian forces probably had the upper hand: they 'remained in possession of the battlefield' (*wel stowe gewald ahton*).<sup>111</sup>

<sup>106</sup> Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, p. 322; cf. Smyth, *King Alfred the Great*, p. 436, who sees this as a purely West Saxon affair, reckoning Byrhtsige to have been a West Saxon descendant of Æthelwulf and Ecgerht.

<sup>107</sup> For the dating of these events, see F. T. Wainwright, 'The Chronology of the "Mercian Register"', *English Historical Review*, 60 (1945), 385–92 (pp. 390–91).

<sup>108</sup> Jeremy Haslam, 'The Towns of Wiltshire', in *Anglo-Saxon Towns in Southern England*, ed. by Jeremy Haslam (Chichester: Phillimore, 1984), pp. 87–147 (p. 107). A useful assessment of the effectiveness of West Saxon defences is Abels, 'English Logistics and Military Administration'.

<sup>109</sup> ASC 904 A, 905 BCD (= 902–03), ed. by Earle and Plummer, I, 92–93 (trans. by Whitelock and others, p. 59).

<sup>110</sup> Pauline Stafford, *Unification and Conquest: A Political and Social History of England in the Tenth and Eleventh Centuries* (London: Hodder Arnold, 1989), pp. 31–34. L. Abrams, 'Edward the Elder's Danelaw', in *Edward the Elder*, ed. by Higham and Hill, pp. 128–43 (pp. 138–39); cf. Simon D. Keynes, 'Edward, King of the Anglo-Saxons', in *ibid.*, pp. 40–66 (pp. 57–59).

<sup>111</sup> ASC 904 A, 905 BCD (= 902–03), ed. by Earle and Plummer, I, 94–95 (trans. by Whitelock and others, p. 60). Hart, *The Danelaw*, pp. 513–15, provides useful insights into the West Saxons' problems in East Anglia.

Furthermore, it may be suggested that the Vikings only discredited Æthelwold's cause *after* his defeat. If a bid for kingship could depend upon the support of a powerful backer, the Vikings, having assumed the possession of the Northumbrian and East Anglian kingdoms, fulfilled that criterion. Insofar as their territorial control had been established for two decades and notwithstanding the West Saxon campaigns which were to hit them in the tenth century, the Vikings of late ninth-century England were part of the political 'establishment' in a way that the roving bands of Vikings in ninth-century West Francia or Magyar armies in tenth-century Ottonian Germany could not be for Frankish or Saxon rebels. Perhaps, ultimately, Æthelwold had chosen well.

### *Edward the Elder: Counterstrategies*

In view of the focus of this chapter, I have deliberately kept discussion to Æthelwold rather than addressing his royal cousin's perspective here, but it is worth drawing to a conclusion with the question of the continuation of the line of Alfred the Great. It was not necessarily an auspicious continuity. Edward's coronation was not held until June 900, a full eight months after his father's death.<sup>112</sup> There is a case for the need for a seemly pause before the coronation of new Anglo-Saxon monarchs, but this does not necessarily mean to say that in Edward's case such an interval was desirable, as Æthelwold's actions may have been the cause of the delay.<sup>113</sup>

The similarity of Edward's strategies to those of his cousin are worthy of remark, reflecting once more the importance of codes in the conduct of early medieval politics. If Æthelwold harked back to his branch of the royal family in seizing Wimborne, Edward's seizure of Badbury Rings, an Iron Age hillfort some four miles to its west, emphasized royal power over the administrative landscape. Badbury has been suggested as 'Mount Badon', the site of the sixth-century battle

<sup>112</sup> Pentecost (8 June) 900, according to Æthelweard, *Chronicon*, p. 51. For the importance of coronations, see Janet L. Nelson, 'Inauguration Rituals', in *Early Medieval Kingship*, ed. by P. H. Sawyer and I. N. Wood (Leeds: University of Leeds, 1977), pp. 50–71 and, with specific reference to Edward's coronation, Nelson, 'The Second English Ordo', in her *Politics and Ritual in Early Medieval Europe* (London: Hambledon, 1986), pp. 361–74.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. G. Garnett, 'Coronation and Propaganda: Some Implications of the Norman Claim to the Throne of England in 1066', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th series, 36 (1986) 91–116 (p. 92).

against the Saxons,<sup>114</sup> although it is questionable as to whether Edward was aware of this; 'British' symbolism may be going too far. Domesday Book records Badbury as the name of the hundred in which Wimborne stood.<sup>115</sup> If Æthelwold was calling on support through Wimborne, Edward was also appropriating the assembly site in the political landscape to do the same. Edward came to Badbury *mid fyrde*. As assemblies of the army signified legitimacy, this was important for the legitimacy of West Saxon kingship, as Carolingian kingship.<sup>116</sup> Ultimately, here in Wessex, it was this which led to Edward's success. Edward's use of Badbury Rings as, in effect, a siege castle had a military significance which presaged a strategy used later in Edward's 'reconquest' of the Danelaw.<sup>117</sup> However, if both sides resorted to codes of action and expectation of counteraction, it was presumably a larger support base which ultimately prevailed.

Nonetheless, from King Edward's point of view, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* reflects the remarkable manner in which for some three years the West Saxons' strategy was dictated by Æthelwold and his allies. Only in the death of Æthelwold can Edward be seen to have gained, and even this appears unplanned, suggesting that the maxim of early medieval warfare, to avoid battle wherever possible, was applicable when a long way outside one's own territory.<sup>118</sup> The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* records that upon his ordered retreat from East Anglia, Edward sent seven messengers to

<sup>114</sup> Gildas, *The Ruin of Britain*, ed. and trans. by J. Morris (Chichester: Phillimore, 1978), ch. 26.1 (pp. 28 and 98); Nennius, *Historia Brittonum*, Chapter 56 in *British History and the Welsh Annals*, ed. and trans. by John Morris (Chichester: Phillimore, 1980), pp. 35 and 76; K. Jackson, 'The Site of Mount Badon', *Journal of Celtic Studies*, 2 (1958), 152–58.

<sup>115</sup> A. Williams, 'Dorset Geld Rolls', in *Victoria History of the County of Dorset*, vol. III, ed. by R. B. Pugh (London: Victoria County History, 1972), pp. 115–49 (pp. 128–29).

<sup>116</sup> See Timothy Reuter, 'Assembly Politics in Western Europe From the Eighth Century to the Twelfth', in *The Medieval World*, ed. by Peter Linehan and Janet L. Nelson (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 432–50 (repr. in *Medieval Politics*, ed. by Nelson, pp. 193–216); also Stuart Airlie, 'Talking Heads: Assemblies in Early Medieval Germany', in *Political Assemblies in the Earlier Middle Ages*, ed. by Paul S. Barnwell and Marco Mostert, *Studies in the Early Middle Ages*, 7 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), pp. 29–46.

<sup>117</sup> I am grateful to Ann Williams for drawing my attention to this. See *ASC* 912 AB, 913 CD (= 912), 921 A (= 918), 922 A (= 919), ed. by Earle and Plummer, I, 96–97, 103–04 (trans. by Whitelock and others, pp. 62, 66–67).

<sup>118</sup> John Gillingham, 'William the Bastard at War', in *Studies in Medieval History Presented to R. Allen Brown*, ed. by Christopher Harper-Bill, Christopher Holdsworth, and Janet L. Nelson (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1985), pp. 141–58. Cf. C. J. Rogers, 'The Vegetian Science of Warfare in the Middle Ages', *Journal of Medieval Military History*, 1 (2002), 1–19.

the men of Kent in order to recall them,<sup>119</sup> a figure which hints at a level of tragedy of legendary proportions that has been lost to us: an English *Chanson de Roland*, perhaps? It is surely under such adversity that reputations were made, and given that the death of Ealdorman Sigehelm would result in the marriage of Edward to Sigehelm's daughter Eadgifu, a marriage which would in turn result in the continuity of Alfred's line, there was good reason for the West Saxons and the English to make the most of such adversity.

### *Conclusion*

To return to the original focus of this chapter, however, it is important to acknowledge the audacity of Æthelwold's actions, which, by the reactions that they received, were effective. Ultimately, we cannot be sure about how close to success he came as his death in battle removed the threat which faced Edward. Because neither party was apparently prepared to treat with the other, Æthelwold's actions could be said to have differed from the politically expedient practice of Ottonian or Carolingian rebellions, most of which could be said to have been resolved in a (quasi-)legal fashion. However, I do not think that the dramatic death of Æthelwold should be allowed to overshadow the fact that seizing Wimborne drew attention to Æthelwold's position. By both working with the political language of legitimacy current in later Anglo-Saxon England and making the best use of the politics of Anglo-Scandinavian relations, Æthelwold well deserves to be ranked amongst the 'Nearly Men' of early medieval Europe.<sup>120</sup>

Beyond Æthelwold's own intentions and aggrieved sense of legitimacy, it is possible to see the developments of kingship during Edward's reign as a result of the reactions to Æthelwold's actions. Edward's position in Anglo-Saxon England saw an intensification of Alfredian policy as the West Saxon royal family was — to use another Reuterian term — Carolingianized. The Battle of the Holme did see the loss of a large swathe of the Anglo-Scandinavian nobility, but it paved the way for Edward to impose a peace agreement a few years later, which was a significant step

<sup>119</sup> ASC 904 A, 905 BCD (= 902–03), ed. by Earle and Plummer, I, 94–95 (trans. by Whitelock and others, p. 60). Hart, *The Danelaw*, p. 515, considers this to have been a strategic error on Edward's part.

<sup>120</sup> The term is Stuart Airlie's. See note 7. For a consideration of the *damnatio memoriae* of 'also-rans', see Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance*, pp. 134–57.

towards establishing West Saxon hegemony in England.<sup>121</sup> It had been, like so many things, a close run thing, and events in East Anglia were almost farcical in their tragedy, but a better understanding of Æthelwold's actions does allow us to see the emergence of an Anglo-Saxon state developing along the lines of Saxon hegemony in Ottonian Germany in the tenth century. It may only be a small contribution in the scheme of developments in western Europe during a crucial period in its political formation, but Tim Reuter's legacy allows us a better appreciation of this fact.<sup>122</sup>

<sup>121</sup> ASC 905 A, 906 CDE (= ?906), ed. by Earle and Plummer, I, 94–95 (trans. by Whitelock and others, p. 60).

<sup>122</sup> Since the submission of this paper, I have noticed that the implications of Æthelwold's rebellion are commented on in two significant works and, in the interests of providing as full a commentary as possible in a volume dedicated to the memory of Tim Reuter, it is fitting to note them here: John Hill, *The Anglo-Saxon Warrior Ethic: Reconstructing Lordship in Early English Literature* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000), pp. 88–92, and Pauline Stafford, "'The Annals of Æthelflæd': Annals, History and Politics in Early Tenth-Century England", in *Myth, Rulership, Church and Charters: Essays in Honour of Nicholas Brooks*, ed. by Julia Barrow and Andrew Wareham (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 101–16 (pp. 109–10).

## READING OTTONIAN HISTORY: THE *SONDERWEG* AND OTHER MYTHS

David A. Warner

In his controversial novel, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, Nikos Kazantzakis (1883–1957) includes the following scene.<sup>1</sup> At a quiet moment, as events leading to his arrest and crucifixion are played out, Jesus asks about a notebook in which the evangelist Matthew has been furiously scribbling throughout the story. Matthew replies that he is recording Jesus’s ‘life and works for men of the future’. Jesus begins reading the text. As he does so, he becomes more and more agitated. Finally, he stands up and screams, ‘Lies! Lies! Lies! [. . .] I was born in Nazareth not Bethlehem, [. . .] and I don’t remember any Magi. I never in my life went to Egypt; and what you write about the dove saying “This is my beloved son” to me as I was being baptized — who revealed that to you? [. . .] How did you find out, you, who weren’t even there?’ As Jesus scatters the pages of the notebook around the room, Matthew explains, in effect, that he is not propagating lies, but rather a higher truth, revealed by an angel who comes to him whenever he takes up his pen. This being Kazantzakis rather than the Gospels, Jesus then has a moment of doubt, followed by a revelation: ‘Bethlehem, Magi, Egypt, and “you are my beloved son”: if this was the highest level of truth, inhabited only by God [. . .] If what we called truth, God called lies.’ The thought and the question implied by it are then allowed to drop. Jesus returns the scattered pages to Matthew and tells him to ‘write whatever the angel dictates’.

For modern readers of medieval works of history, this anecdote should resonate with a degree of familiarity. Like Matthew, the authors of those works commonly

<sup>1</sup> Nikos Kazantzakis, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, trans. by P. A. Bien (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1960), pp. 391–92.

resorted to an angelic truth, one that was both overtly teleological and frankly propagandistic. This truth identified Christian salvation as history's ultimate goal and perceived the hand of God in the course of all human events.<sup>2</sup> From such a perspective, the writing of history might assume the character of an 'exegetical process' or a 'visual theology' which revealed a spiritual truth of greater worth than its mundane counterpart.<sup>3</sup> Its purpose, if we follow Sulpicius Severus (d. c. 420), was to 'rouse the enthusiasm of readers for true wisdom, for heavenly military service, and divine heroism'.<sup>4</sup> To the truth pursued by Matthew and his medieval counterparts, Kazantzakis's Jesus appears to propose an alternative that is empirical, objective, and based on reliable testimony rather than conversations with celestial beings.<sup>5</sup> Jesus argues, in effect, that Matthew's biography is inaccurate, insufficiently grounded in the sources (i.e. Jesus's own eyewitness testimony), and subjective. This alternative truth should also sound familiar as it corresponds to ideals that have influenced historical thinking since the nineteenth century, when history became a profession that largely rejected transhistorical and supernatural standards of truth.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> This widely acknowledged characteristic of medieval historiography is discussed by Franz-Josef Schmale, *Funktion und Formen mittelalterlicher Geschichtsschreibung: Eine Einführung* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1985), pp. 38–54. For a more nuanced definition, see Paolo Delogu, *An Introduction to Medieval History*, trans. by Mathew Moran (London: Duckworth, 2002), pp. 103–04.

<sup>3</sup> The references are to, respectively, Verena Epp, 'Von Spurensuchern und Zeichendeuten: Zum Selbstverständnismittelalterlicher Geschichtsschreiber', in *Von Fakten und Fiktionen: Mittelalterliche Geschichtsdarstellungen und ihre kritische Aufarbeitung*, ed. by Johannes Laudage, *Europäische Geschichtsdarstellungen*, 1 (Cologne: Böhlau, 2003), pp. 43–62 (pp. 50–51); and Giselle de Nie, 'Gregory of Tours' Smile: Spiritual Reality, Imagination and Earthly Events in the "Histories"', in *Historiographie im frühen Mittelalter*, ed. by Anton Scharer and Georg Scheibelreiter, *Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung*, 32 (Vienna: R. Oldenbourg, 1994), pp. 68–95 (p. 70).

<sup>4</sup> Sulpicius Severus, *Vita s. Martini*, 1. 6 = Sulpice Sévère, *Vie de saint Martin*, ed. and trans. by Jacques Fontaine, 3 vols, *Sources Chrétiennes*, 133–35 (Paris: Cerf, 1967–69), 1, 252. The translation provided here is taken from *Early Christian Lives*, trans. by Carolinne White (London: Penguin, 1998), p. 135.

<sup>5</sup> Here, I refer to characteristics of modern historical practice cited by Michael Stanford, *An Introduction to the Philosophy of History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), pp. 51, 55.

<sup>6</sup> Georg P. Iggers, 'The Professionalization of Historical Studies and the Guiding Assumptions of Modern Historical Thought', in *A Companion to Western Historical Thought*, ed. by Lloyd Kramer and Sarah Maza (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), pp. 225–42 (p. 232); Harold Mah, 'German Historical Thought in the Age of Herder, Kant, and Hegel', in *ibid.*, pp. 143–65 (p. 143).

To a greater or lesser extent, the new standards assumed that historians would be objective in their viewpoint and scientific in their methodology.<sup>7</sup>

And yet, there was and may always be more to the practice of history than the pursuit of truth, however defined or interpreted. If nothing else, the notion that the entire sweep of human history reflected God's will was flexible enough to include virtually any event, great or small. It might also encompass any agenda. As the 'establishment man' among the evangelists, the historical Matthew aimed not only to assert the divinity of Jesus, but also to tie his life to the messianic traditions of Jewish scripture.<sup>8</sup> The Jesus of Matthew's Gospel would fulfill the law and the prophets of Israel rather than abolish them (RSV Matt. 5. 14). Matthew's medieval counterparts could adopt an even more expansive approach. To cite a familiar example, the fact that Gregory of Tours (d. 594) chose to begin his *History of the Franks* with an account of Adam and Eve's expulsion from the garden of Eden says much about the capacity of medieval writers to intermingle human and divine history.<sup>9</sup> Gregory concluded his work with an oath comparable to that with which the evangelist John concluded his exposition of the Apocalypse (Rev. 22. 18–19).<sup>10</sup> Between Genesis and the Apocalypse, the ten books of Gregory's history were to provide a running commentary on the struggle between good and evil as manifested in the 'wars of kings against hostile peoples, of martyrs against the heathen,

<sup>7</sup> There appears to be general agreement that the influence of the natural sciences varied in intensity over time and that the term 'scientific history' may have been interpreted differently within the various national communities of historians. In general, see Robert Harrison and others, 'Methodology: "Scientific" History and the Problem of Objectivity', in *Making History*, ed. by Peter Lambert and Philip Schofield (London: Routledge, 2004), pp. 26–37; Eckhardt Fuchs, 'Conceptions of Scientific History in the Nineteenth-Century West', in *Turning Points in Historiography: A Cross Cultural Perspective*, ed. by Q. Edward Wang and Georg G. Iggers (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2002), pp. 147–61 (pp. 149, 154).

<sup>8</sup> Matthew is characterized as an 'establishment man' and a 'drab and not entirely appealing "safe man"', by John Updike, 'The Gospel According to Matthew', in his *Odd Jobs: Essays and Criticism* (New York: Knopf, 1991), pp. 231–39 (p. 231). See also Francis W. Beare, *The Gospel According to Matthew: A Commentary* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1981), pp. 5–8; Donald Senior, *Matthew* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), pp. 22, 27–28.

<sup>9</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Libri historiarum X*, ed. by Bruno Krusch and Wilhelm Levison, MGH *Scriptores Rerum Merovingiarum*, 1.1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1951), Bk 1, c. 1, p. 5.

<sup>10</sup> *Libri historiarum*, Bk 10, c. 31, p. 536. My analysis draws on Martin Heinzelmann, *Gregory of Tours: History and Society in the Sixth Century*, trans. by Christopher Carroll (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 94.

the church against heretics'.<sup>11</sup> At least this was the intention that Gregory announced in the preface to the first book. Nevertheless, one can scarcely read his work without appreciating the importance in it of more personal and pragmatic agendas.<sup>12</sup> However much one may search his testimony for the typical, Gregory's voice remains that of a particular individual, who existed within a specific nexus of familial relationships and pursued specific interests.<sup>13</sup>

Given the evidence of teleology and unabashed propaganda in medieval works of history, one might hesitate to accept their authors' *causae scribendi*, as written.<sup>14</sup> At the very least, like the figure of Jesus in Kazantzakis's novel, we may recognize that we are confronting a definition of history radically different from our own.<sup>15</sup> One should not be surprised to find, therefore, that modern interpretations of medieval historical writing tend to ignore the authors' stated intentions in favour of other, seemingly more valid, ones extracted from their texts by inference or process of deduction. By reading between the lines, according to the common wisdom, we learn about authors' beliefs and aspirations, personal and corporate loyalties, feuds, and perhaps what they sought to forget or suppress.<sup>16</sup> Expressions of unworthiness or inferior ability, the desire to serve God or posterity, and similar motivations are relegated to the realm of the *topos*, the 'stockroom' of classical and medieval rhetoric.<sup>17</sup> They are joined there by miracles, portents, prodigies, and

<sup>11</sup> Gregory of Tours, *Libri historiarum X, Praefatio prima*, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> This assumption underlies many of the essays collected in *The World of Gregory of Tours*, ed. by Kathleen Mitchell and Ian Wood (Leiden: Brill, 2003): see especially, Felice Lifshitz, 'Apostolicity Theses in Gaul: The Histories of Gregory and the "Hagiography" of Bayeux', pp. 211–28 (pp. 216–18).

<sup>13</sup> Ian Wood, 'The Individuality of Gregory of Tours', in *The World of Gregory of Tours*, ed. by Mitchell and Wood, pp. 29–46 (p. 46).

<sup>14</sup> Gerd Althoff, 'Causa scribendi und Darstellungsabsicht: Die Lebensbeschreibungen der Königin Mathilde und andere Beispielen', in *Litterae Medii Aevi: Festschrift für Johanne Autenrieth zu ihrem 65. Geburtstag*, ed. by Michael Borgolte and Hans Spilling (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1988), pp. 117–33 (pp. 117–19).

<sup>15</sup> Typical are Gabrielle Spiegel's comments in 'Historical Thought in Medieval Europe', in *Companion to Western Historical Thought*, ed. by Kramer and Maza, pp. 78–98 (p. 78).

<sup>16</sup> Patrick Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance: Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 8.

<sup>17</sup> The characterization of *topoi* (i.e. topics) as the stockroom of rhetoric is taken from Ernst R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, trans. by Willard R. Trask (New York: Pantheon, 1953), p. 79. The use of *topoi* by historians in the Middle Ages is discussed in detail by Gertrud Simon, 'Untersuchungen zur Topik der Widmungsbriefe mittelalterlicher

other aspects of medieval thinking that fall outside the professional belief systems of modern historians.<sup>18</sup> But herein lies the dilemma. In favouring modern analysis over medieval forthrightness we may simply favour modern assumptions over medieval ones, in effect, replacing their teleology with our 'Great Stories' and metahistories.<sup>19</sup>

In recent years, many of the Great Stories, metahistories, and other fundamental assumptions embraced by previous generations of historians have been subjected to intense scrutiny. Although science remains the standard of proof for most intellectual thought, for example, its privileged status as a repository of empirical, politically neutral, universal knowledge is no longer treated as a given.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, the mainstream science to which the founders of professional history could have turned for models included ideas and theories now viewed as pseudo-science.<sup>21</sup> Debate continues regarding the relevance of scientific method to the discipline of history.<sup>22</sup> Meanwhile, some critics argue that history is not about science, but about language and aesthetics.<sup>23</sup> Above all, the proposition that the past can be viewed in anything like an objective manner has been undermined by growing scepticism regarding the ability of historians to separate themselves sufficiently from

Geschichtsschreiber bis zum Ende des 12. Jahrhunderts', *Archiv für Diplomatik*, 4 (1958), 52–119, and 5–6 (1959/60), 73–153.

<sup>18</sup> Robert M. Stein, 'Literary Criticism and the Evidence for History', in *Writing History*, ed. by Stefan Berger, Heiko Feldner, and Keven Passmore (London: Hodder Education, 2003), pp. 67–87 (p. 71).

<sup>19</sup> The concept 'Great Stories' is defined by Robert F. Berkhofer Jr, *Beyond the Great Story: History as Text and Discourse* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1995), pp. 38–39. The term metahistory is closely, but not exclusively, associated with the work of Hayden White. For a brief discussion, see Keith Jenkins, 'Metahistory', in *Encyclopaedia of Historians and Historical Writing*, ed. by Kelly Boyd, 2 vols (London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1999), II, 805.

<sup>20</sup> See Nancy Leys Stepan, 'Race and Gender: The Role of Analogy in Science', in *Science, Race, and Ethnicity: Readings from Isis and Osiris*, ed. by John P. Jackson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), pp. 5–21; Helga Nowotny, Peter Scott, and Michael Gibbons, *Re-thinking Science: Knowledge and the Public in an Age of Uncertainty* (Cambridge: Polity, 2001), p. 52.

<sup>21</sup> One might cite the widespread resort of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scientists to metaphors based on race and gender: Stepan, 'Race and Gender', pp. 6–8, 13–15.

<sup>22</sup> John L. Gaddis, *The Landscape of History: How Historians Map the Past* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 37–43.

<sup>23</sup> Keith Jenkins, *Refiguring History: New Thoughts on an Old Discipline* (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 34–60; *The Routledge Companion to Historical Studies*, ed. by Alun Munslow (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 152.

the values of the society in which they live or from the perspective of their own place within the flow of historical time.<sup>24</sup> If the past that was and the past that historians write about are so different, of what value is the work of historians?<sup>25</sup> Even the process of remembering, the basis for all historical thought, may be so subject to unconscious manipulation as to raise serious questions regarding the reliability of our evidence and perhaps suggest that attempts to understand the past are largely the product of modern scholarly fantasy.<sup>26</sup>

The anger of Kazantzakis's Jesus, if we may stretch this anecdote even more, is comparable to the anguish expressed by some modern historians who view post-modern criticism as a threat to the very existence of history as a discipline.<sup>27</sup> Although the anguish is understandable, the threat may be more apparent than real. In recent years, medievalists, in particular, have witnessed the deconstruction of familiar terms such as feudalism, renaissance, and ritual.<sup>28</sup> Even the term Middle Ages has been unmasked and revealed to be not only a scholarly construct, but one

<sup>24</sup> Stanford, *Introduction to the Philosophy of History*, p. 53. With specific regard to the German scholarly community and German medieval scholarship, see, e.g., Peter Johanek, 'Mittelalterforschung in Deutschland um 2000', in *Mediävistik im 21. Jahrhundert: Stand und Perspektiven der internationalen und interdisziplinären Mittelalterforschung*, ed. by Hans-Werner Goetz and Jörg Jarnut, *MittelalterStudien*, 1 (Munich: Fink, 2003), pp. 21–34; Hans-Werner Goetz, *Moderne Mediävistik: Stand und Perspektiven der Mittelalterforschung* (Darmstadt: Primus, 1999), pp. 104–25.

<sup>25</sup> On this question see, for example, Keith Jenkins, *Re-thinking History* (London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 6–16; Susan A. Crane, 'Language, Literary Studies, and Historical Thought', in *Companion to Western Historical Thought*, ed. by Kramer and Maza, pp. 319–36 (p. 319).

<sup>26</sup> Johannes Fried has explored the inherently ambiguous and, for historians, troubling relationship between history and memory in *Der Schleier der Erinnerung: Grundzüge einer historischen Memorik* (Munich: Beck, 2004); *Die Aktualität des Mittelalters: Gegen die Überheblichkeit unserer Wissenschaftsgesellschaft* (Stuttgart: Dieter Winkler, 2003); *Geschichte und Gehirn: Irritationen der Geschichtswissenschaft durch Gedächtniskritik* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2003); 'Erinnerung und Vergessen: Die gegenwart stiftet die Einheit der Vergangenheit', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 273 (2001), 561–93; and 'Wissenschaft und Phantasie: Das Beispiel der Geschichte', *Historische Zeitschrift*, 263 (1996), 291–316.

<sup>27</sup> E.g. Keith Windschuttle, 'A Critique of the Postmodern Turn in Western Historiography', in *Turning Points in Historiography*, ed. by Wang and Iggers, pp. 271–85 (p. 283).

<sup>28</sup> See, respectively, Susan Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals: The Medieval Evidence Reinterpreted* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 475–82; Jacques Le Goff, 'What Did the Twelfth-Century Mean?', in *The Medieval World*, ed. by Peter Linehan and Janet L. Nelson (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 635–47 (pp. 635–36, 643); Philippe Buc, *The Dangers of Ritual: Between Early Medieval Texts and Social Scientific Theory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), *passim*.

with questionable relevance for historically underrepresented or minority groups.<sup>29</sup> Despite such challenges, or because of them, the study of the Middle Ages continues to thrive. Still, the question remains, is it possible to read medieval texts in anything approaching an objective manner if even the language we employ in interpreting them incorporates unspoken assumptions, constructs, and rhetorical strategies?<sup>30</sup>

In this chapter, I discuss several assumptions which, so I believe, have had a profound impact on modern readings of Ottonian history. The first section, 'National Histories and the Medieval State', considers the influence of nineteenth-century assumptions regarding the centrality of the state on the master narrative of Ottonian history. Within that narrative, so I argue, such assumptions have lent support to definitions of politics and power that are potentially anachronistic and largely unacknowledged. Building on arguments formulated within section one, section two, 'The *Sonderweg* and the Presumption of Ottonian Success', examines the medieval aspect of an ongoing debate regarding the chronology of Germany's unique path (*Sonderweg*) to modernity and to its chief emblem, the nation-state.

Credit for pointing out the influence of the *Sonderweg* on modern interpretations of medieval German history is chiefly due to Timothy Reuter, who explored this topic in two typically provocative articles.<sup>31</sup> According to Reuter, the medieval German *Sonderweg* is a construct founded on the inherently anachronistic assumption that the emergence of the modern state was both inevitable and desirable.<sup>32</sup> Along with the *Sonderweg*, this 'modernization paradigm' has ensured that the histories of the Salian and Staufer dynasties tend to be approached with an underlying sense of failure, as it was during their era that Germany's progress

<sup>29</sup> Patricia Skinner, 'Confronting the "Medieval" in Medieval History: The Jewish Example', *Past and Present*, 181 (2003), 219–47, esp. pp. 221–22.

<sup>30</sup> On this much discussed theme, see, in general, Nancy F. Partner, 'Historicity in an Age of Reality-Fictions', in *A New Philosophy of History*, ed. by Frank Ankersmit and Hans Kellner (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), pp. 21–39 (pp. 21–24 and passim).

<sup>31</sup> Timothy Reuter, 'The Medieval German *Sonderweg*? The Empire and its Rulers in the High Middle Ages', in *Kings and Kingship in Medieval Europe*, ed. by Anne J. Duggan (London: Kings College London CLAMS, 1993), pp. 179–211; Reuter, 'Nur im Westen was Neues? Das Werden prämoderner Staatsformen im europäischen Hochmittelalter', in *Deutschland und der Westen Europas im Mittelalter*, ed. by Joachim Ehlers, Vorträge und Forschungen, 56 (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke, 2002), pp. 327–50. Both articles (the latter translated into English) have been reprinted in Timothy Reuter, *Medieval Politics and Modern Mentalities* ed. by Janet L. Nelson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 388–412, and pp. 432–58.

<sup>32</sup> Reuter, 'Medieval German *Sonderweg*?', pp. 179, 199–200.

towards a modern state is presumed to have been aborted. In my view, the influence of the *Sonderweg* has also ensured that the history of the Ottonians, predecessors of the Salians and Staufer, is commonly approached with an underlying sense of success. This presumption of success may be as anachronistic as the *Sonderweg* and is equally deserving of scrutiny.

The third section of this chapter, 'Medieval Texts: Modern Readers', focuses on a specific group of historical texts that were compiled in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. In general, this section suggests that current interpretations of these texts rest on assumptions that have as much to do with modern scholarly agendas as with anything medieval authors may have thought or experienced. In particular, this section suggests how these texts might be reinterpreted in light of the principles laid out in sections one and two. A reading that avoided reference to narratives of state-formation or of political triumph and tragedy would not necessarily produce a more accurate rendering of Ottonian history, but it might ensure that attempts at such a rendering better account for the complexities of the era and of the writers upon whose thoughts any modern interpretation must inevitably be based.

It is not my intention to suggest that my own readings of Ottonian history are necessarily more objective, or final, in any positivist sense, than the readings of my predecessors or contemporaries. If nothing else, post-modern criticism has established that true objectivity is unobtainable and that no interpretation of the past can ever be more than provisional. The problem, I suggest, is not so much that assumptions and constructs exist, but rather that we may be unaware of them and thereby limit the range of our inquiries unnecessarily. Kazantzakis's imaginary encounter between Jesus and Matthew may provide an appropriate response to this dilemma, namely, that we should acknowledge the 'angelic truths' that have informed our reading of medieval texts at the same time that we examine the truths deposited in those texts by their medieval authors.<sup>33</sup> With that response in mind, I conclude this chapter, in the section 'Women and History', by suggesting that recognition of the constructed character of Ottonian history may allow for new, potentially rewarding approaches to an issue that has been particularly freighted with anachronistic and otherwise questionable assumptions: the contribution of women to Ottonian intellectual culture. By focussing on the characteristics that men and women shared, as intellectuals and writers, rather than the characteristics

<sup>33</sup> The general point is argued by Timothy Reuter in 'Reading the Tenth Century', in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. III: c. 900–1024, ed. by Timothy Reuter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 1–26 (p. 3 and passim).

that divided them, by daring to assume that an anonymous text associated with a community of religious women may have been actually compiled by a woman, we will not necessarily arrive at a more accurate rendering of Ottonian intellectual life, but we may attain one that is less weighted by modern assumptions regarding gender and is no less plausible than other, currently prevailing interpretations.

### *National Histories and the Medieval State*

Although I began this essay with an account of the failings and inadequacies of historians in the Middle Ages, one should note that the historical truths propagated by their modern counterparts have been subjected to equally fierce criticism. In particular, critics have noted the degree to which the assumptions of contemporary medievalists still rest on perceptions formulated in the nineteenth century.<sup>34</sup> Within the historiography of medieval Germany, as a substantial body of literature suggests, such perceptions were commonly influenced by sentiments having more to do with Germany's political present than its medieval past. They also tended to focus on the history of the medieval state.<sup>35</sup> Leopold von Ranke (1795–1886) and other founders of German historical practice wrote with the vision of a German nation united under Prussian leadership before them.<sup>36</sup> That vision continued to haunt them as they turned their attention to that nation's presumed medieval counterpart. Ranke's pupil Wilhelm von Giesebrecht (1814–79) wrote his six-volume history of the medieval German *Reich* with the specific aim of advancing German nationhood.<sup>37</sup> Heinrich von Sybel (1817–95) and Julius Ficker (1826–1902) debated the relative merits of a *kleindeutsche* (Austria out) versus a

<sup>34</sup> E.g. R. Howard Bloch and Stephen G. Nichols, 'Introduction', in *Medievalism and the Modernist Temper*, ed. by Bloch and Nichols (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), pp. 1–22 (p. 2).

<sup>35</sup> Although I employ this term without qualification, the question of whether or not one should employ the term 'state' in a medieval context remains subject to vigorous debate: Rees Davies, 'The Medieval State: The Tyranny of a Concept?', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 16 (2003), 280–300.

<sup>36</sup> Harry Liebersohn, 'German Historical Writing from Ranke to Weber: The Primacy of Politics', in *Companion to Western Historical Thought*, ed. by Kramer and Maza, pp. 166–84 (pp. 167–71).

<sup>37</sup> Wilhelm von Giesebrecht, *Geschichte der deutschen Kaiserzeit*, 6 vols (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1877–95). This theme is evident throughout the author's general introduction to volume I, but see in particular pp. x–xi.

*großdeutsche* (Austria in) approach to German nationhood against the backdrop of the medieval German empire.<sup>38</sup> For a later generation, the image of the German Middle Ages as 'a fortunate time of unity, community, and universality' provided a counterpoise to what conservative, anti-liberal sentiment perceived as the unrestrained individualism and political anarchy of the modern world and especially of the Weimar era.<sup>39</sup> Throughout the nineteenth and much of the twentieth centuries, such sentiments were widespread among German academics, including medievalists, although they were embraced with differing levels of enthusiasm.<sup>40</sup> That nationalism exercised a powerful and ubiquitous influence on nineteenth-

<sup>38</sup> The relevant *Streitschriften* are collected in *Universalstaat oder Nationalstaat: Macht und Ende des Ersten deutschen Reiches*, ed. by Friedrich Schneider (Innsbruck: Wagner, 1941). For a description and analysis of the debate (from a Marxist perspective), see Gottfried Koch, 'Der Streit zwischen Sybel und Ficker und die Einschätzung der mittelalterlichen Kaiserpolitik in der modernen Historiographie', in *Die deutsche Geschichtswissenschaft vom Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zur Reichseinigung von oben: Studien über die deutsche Geschichtswissenschaft*, ed. by Joachim Streisand, 2 vols (Berlin: Akademie, 1969), I, 311–36 (pp. 313–20).

<sup>39</sup> Otto Gerhard Oexle, 'Die Moderne und ihr Mittelalter: Eine folgenreiche Problemgeschichte', in *Mittelalter und Moderne: Entdeckung und Rekonstruktion der mittelalterlichen Welt*, ed. by Peter Segl (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1997), pp. 307–64 (p. 310): 'glückliche Zeiten von Einheit, Gemeinschaft und Ganzheit'. Although strongly focussed on the early to middle decades of the twentieth century, Oexle's essay deals with these conflicting images of the German Middle Ages from c. 1800 to approximately the date of publication. On 'political medievalism' under Weimar see, in particular, Oexle, 'Das Mittelalter und das Unbehagen an der Moderne: Mittelalterbeschwörungen in der Weimarer Republik und danach', in his *Geschichtswissenschaft im Zeichen des Historismus: Studien zur Problemgeschichte der Moderne* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), pp. 137–62.

<sup>40</sup> Fritz K. Ringer, *The Decline of the German Mandarins: The German Academic Community, 1890–1933* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969), passim; Winfried Schulze, 'German Historiography from the 1930s to the 1950s', in *Paths of Continuity: Central European Historiography from the 1930s to the 1950s*, ed. by Hartmut Lehmann and James Van Horn Melton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 19–42 (pp. 25–27). Although the degree to which their work was affected may have varied, it is widely acknowledged that, after 1933, German academic historians largely aligned themselves with the National Socialist regime. See, e.g., Hans Schleier, 'German Historiography under National Socialism: Dreams of a Powerful Nation State and German *Volkstum* Come True', in *Writing National Histories: Western Europe since 1800*, ed. by Stefan Berger, Mark Donovan, and Keven Passmore (London: Routledge, 1999), pp. 176–88 (pp. 178–79). With particular regard to German medievalists, see August Nitschke, 'German Politics and Medieval History', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 3 (1968), 75–92; Klaus Schreiner, 'Führertum, Rasse, Reich: Wissenschaft in der Geschichte nach der national-sozialistischen Machtergreifung', in *Wissenschaft im Dritten Reich*, ed. by Peter Lundgreen (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1985), pp. 163–252 (pp. 177, 182–83, 190, 196).

and early twentieth-century intellectuals, German or otherwise, and that it had a particular impact upon the historical profession should come as no great surprise.<sup>41</sup> Insofar as it focussed on the history of the nation-state, the concern of German historians with their nation's past was echoed by scholars working within other, national schools of European historiography.<sup>42</sup> Given their past, sometimes racially charged, enthusiasm for national unity and other patriotic causes, American historians can scarcely complain.<sup>43</sup>

At least in its more virulent form, nationalism is no longer encountered in the work of mainstream, academic historians.<sup>44</sup> Politics and the history of the state remain topics of interest to historians, but their primacy is clearly a thing of the past. Across a fragmented but dynamic discipline, history has been written with the politics left out and seemingly non-political phenomena, such as gender and sexuality, have been placed in political contexts.<sup>45</sup> As the meaning of political history has become subject to debate, some historians have eschewed the term politics in favour of political culture, a much contested concept borrowed from the field

<sup>41</sup> That German intellectuals were not alone in their preoccupation with the national past and that, within Germany, a simple conservative-liberal dichotomy is insufficient explanation for this preoccupation is emphasized by Georg C. Iggers, 'Nationalism and Historiography, 1789–1990: The German Example in Historical Perspective', in *Writing National Histories*, ed. by Berger, Donovan, and Passmore, pp. 15–29 (pp. 15–18).

<sup>42</sup> E.g. Michael Bentley, 'The British State and its Historiography', and Charles-Olivier Carbonell, 'Les origines de l'état moderne: les traditions historiographiques Français (1820–1990)', both in *Visions sur le développement des états Européens: Théories et Historiographiques de l'état moderne*, ed. by Wim Blockmans and Jean-Philippe Genet (Rome: École française de Rome, 1993), pp. 153–68 and pp. 297–312 respectively.

<sup>43</sup> Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: 'The Objectivity Question' and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 72–85, 117–24. With particular regard to American medievalists, see Hans Rudolf Guggisberg, *Das europäische Mittelalter im amerikanischen Geschichtsdenken des 19. und des frühen 20. Jahrhunderts* (Basel: Helbing & Lichtenhahn, 1964), pp. 54–65; Gabrielle M. Spiegel, 'In the Mirror's Eye: The Writing of Medieval History in America', in *Imagined Histories: American Historians Interpret the Past*, ed. by Anthony Molho and Gordon S. Wood (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), pp. 238–62 (p. 254, n. 5).

<sup>44</sup> Indeed, the concept Nation has itself been unmasked as a construct of nineteenth-century historiography: Patrick J. Geary, *The Myth of Nations: The Medieval Origins of Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), pp. 15, 22, 37, 40.

<sup>45</sup> Theodore K. Rabb, 'Whither History? Reflections on the Comparison between Historians and Scientists', in *Developments in Modern Historiography*, ed. by Henry Kozicki (New York: St Martin's Press, 1993), pp. 63–78 (p. 72).

of political science.<sup>46</sup> Although it took somewhat longer to emerge, such thinking is evident within the German scholarly community, as well.<sup>47</sup> Still, old trends die hard, especially in fields with deep historiographical traditions. Within the area of Ottonian history, in particular, the study of politics is currently pursued in ways the founders of the discipline could scarcely have imagined. We have moved from the study of high diplomacy in a hierarchical state to that of ritualized behaviour in a polycentric polity. Studies of the German constitution and formal institutions, such as the royal election, have been supplanted by studies of informal institutions such as royal itineracy. Rather than asking whether or not the Ottonians had a state, more recent literature tends to ask how Ottonian government fulfilled the obligations of a modern state while transcending modern categories of political organization, that is, without possessing the quality of *Staatlichkeit*.<sup>48</sup> Even if Ottonian rulership is defined as stateless, however, the story of the state's birth and evolution continues to influence interpretations of Ottonian history as long as the

<sup>46</sup> Although focussed chiefly on British historiography, comments by Jon Lawrence on the changing interpretation of political history are reflective of the current state of the field: 'Political History', in *Writing History*, ed. by Berger, Feldner, and Passmore, pp. 183–202 (pp. 194–95 and passim). The shift from politics per se to political culture is associated with the shift in attention from the tangible elements of government to ritual behaviour and other, less tangible elements. The history and current, contested status of this term is noted by Ronald P. Formisano, 'The Concept of Political Culture', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 31 (2001), 393–426. For an example of the application of this term to Ottonian politics, see Gerd Althoff, *Die Ottonen: Königsherrschaft ohne Staat*, 2nd edn (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2005), pp. 238, 241.

<sup>47</sup> Insofar as German historiography is concerned, there is general agreement that the focus on politics lasted until the 1960s and perhaps even later. See, e.g., Klaus Schreiner, 'Wissenschaft von der Geschichte des Mittelalters nach 1945: Kontinuitäten der Mittelalterforschung im geteilten Deutschland', in *Deutsche Geschichtswissenschaft nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg (1945–1965)*, ed. by Ernst Schulz (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1989), pp. 87–146 (p. 97); Mary Fulbrook, 'Dividing the Past, Defining the Present: Historians and National Identity in the Two Germanies', in *Writing National Histories*, ed. by Berger, Donovan, and Passmore, pp. 217–29 (p. 221). On the unusually difficult and unsettling quality of German scholarly efforts to generate new historical models, see Peter Lambert, 'Social History in Germany', in *Making History*, ed. by Lambert and Schofield, pp. 93–108.

<sup>48</sup> For classic statements of this viewpoint, see Hagen Keller, 'Zum Charakter der "Staatlichkeit" zwischen karolingischer Reichsreform und hochmittelalterlichen Herrschaftsausbau', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 25 (1989), 248–64 (pp. 248–49); Karl Leyser, 'Ottonian Government', in his *Medieval Germany and its Neighbours, 900–1250* (London: Hambledon, 1982), pp. 69–101. Among more recent literature see, for example, Johannes Fried, *Die Formierung Europas, 840–1040*, Oldenbourg Grundriss der Geschichte, 6 (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1993), p. 74; Althoff, *Die Ottonen*, p. 231.

latter define politics chiefly in terms of kings, dynasties, and courts.<sup>49</sup> Such a definition is not inevitable, however.

Ottonian politics are typically viewed as a kind of *pas de deux* between the monarch and aristocracy that played out within a dense network of personal and familial alliances. The common wisdom regards the aristocracy as ‘a partner with equal rights rather than as an opponent to the king; the state was an aristocracy with a monarchic peak’.<sup>50</sup> And yet, within the parameters of this relationship, rulers also had the capacity to generate disorder, among other things, by bestowing or withholding rewards and marks of honour. Current scholarship tends to place the rebellions generated by such behaviour against the backdrop of Ottonian efforts at centralization and views their collapse, at least implicitly, as a positive step in assuring the unity of the realm.<sup>51</sup> Inevitably, such interpretations rest on knowledge that contemporaries of those rebellions did not possess and assumptions they could not share, clearly, that kings would triumph and survive and rebellions fail, and that unity was a positive or at least important political trend. In short, they rest on hindsight. Without hindsight, it has been argued, efforts to endow the past with meaning are doomed to failure from the start.<sup>52</sup> And yet, hindsight also undermines another ostensible goal of historians, that of interpreting the past on its own terms and for its own sake.<sup>53</sup> Even if overt nationalism is not at issue, the gap between modern hindsight and medieval experience would suggest that any interpretation of Ottonian rebellions or of Ottonian politics, in general, must be considered provisional and subject to revision. In the absence of a transcendent point of reference from which to distinguish between objective truth and interpretation

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Althoff, *Die Ottonen* p. 9. See also Ludger Körntgen, *Königsherrschaft und Gottes Gnade: Zu Kontext und Funktion sakraler Vorstellungen in Historiographie und Bildzeugnissen der ottonisch-frühsalischen Zeit* (Berlin: Akademie, 2001). Körntgen argues that the traditional equation of politics with state-formation has distorted our readings of Ottonian literary evidence, causing us to see political thought, in a modern key, where we ought to have seen moral exempla with an emphasis on the ruler’s salvation.

<sup>50</sup> Hans-Werner Goetz, ‘The Perception of “Power” and “State” in the Early Middle Ages: The Case of the Astronomer’s “Life of Louis the Pious”’, in *Representations of Power in Medieval Germany, 800–1500*, ed. by Björn Weiler and Simon Maclean (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), pp. 15–36 (p. 17).

<sup>51</sup> E.g. Eckhard Müller-Mertens, ‘The Ottonians as Kings and Emperors’, in *New Cambridge Medieval History*, III, 233–66 (p. 245); Althoff, *Die Ottonen*, pp. 81–82.

<sup>52</sup> Jenkins, *Refiguring History*, p. 40.

<sup>53</sup> Jenkins, *Refiguring History*, p. 40.

such revisions need not be motivated solely by the desire for accuracy. A revision that accounts for seeming anomalies on the political landscape or is simply more inclusive may be equally valuable.

In general, current scholarship relating to Ottonian politics tends to focus on the mechanisms of power without contemplating how power itself should be defined.<sup>54</sup> A glance at the literature in ancillary fields might suggest a more nuanced approach. In the fields of political science and political sociology, for example, the definition of power is a matter of heated debate, but there appears to be general agreement that power is not one-dimensional or strictly institutional in nature and that resistance to it is ubiquitous.<sup>55</sup> In the social sciences, apparently, one cannot mention the word power without invoking the authority of Michel Foucault (1926–84). For Foucault, power was not focussed on specific institutions, but rather diffused throughout a society in individual ‘power relationships’ that varied in form and intensity and existed in a constant agonistic state.<sup>56</sup> Although the social sciences tend to focus on modern societies, a model in which hierarchical power relationships coexist with horizontal ones, in a persistent state of tension and struggle, would be particularly relevant to the Ottonian situation. Indeed, the alliances and affinities that shaped the political landscape of the Ottonian realm were not populated solely by magnates. Nor were armed revolts the only vehicle through which resistance was expressed. The clergy formed networks based on patronage and corporate loyalties of all types and degrees of intensity. A monarch who came between an ecclesiastical power broker and his clients or diminished the rights and honour of a spiritual corporation could expect furious opposition, if not outright violence. Monks who abandoned their monastery rather than accept a royally appointed abbot, cathedral canons who elected internal candidates in the

<sup>54</sup> An article by Timothy Reuter examines the social and cultural expression of power relations, but chiefly focuses, rather narrowly, on the cultural markers by which the nobility marked its social territory: Timothy Reuter, ‘Nobles and Others: The Social and Cultural Expression of Power Relations in the Middle Ages’, in *Nobles and Nobility in Medieval Europe: Concepts, Origins, Transformations*, ed. by Anne J. Duggan (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2000), pp. 85–98; repr. in *Medieval Politics*, ed. by Nelson, pp. 111–26.

<sup>55</sup> Gianfranco Poggi, *Forms of Power* (Cambridge: Polity, 2001), pp. 1, 25. Also relevant are comments by John Scott, *Power* (Cambridge: Polity, 2001), p. 25; Joanne P. Sharpe, Paul Routledge, Chris Philo, and Ronan Paddison, ‘Entanglements of Power: Geographies of Domination/Resistance’, in *Entanglements of Power*, ed. by Joanne Sharp and others (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 1–42 (p. 20).

<sup>56</sup> Michel Foucault, ‘The Power and Subject’, in *Power: Critical Concepts*, ed. by John Scott, 3 vols (London: Routledge, 1994), I, 218–33 (pp. 225, 229).

face of opposition from the ruler, these were as rebellious, in their way, as the magnate who expressed his resistance through acts of violence and mayhem. But the tension did not necessarily end here. Both ecclesiastical and secular magnates had to deal with their own, sometimes unruly, networks of power relationships.<sup>57</sup> Indeed, one would suspect that even relations between magnates and their servile dependents were not lacking in an undertone of resistance, perhaps even violent resistance, on the part of the apparently weaker party.<sup>58</sup> While a more expansive definition of the terms 'politics' and 'political' would not necessarily yield a more accurate picture of Ottonian politics, by permitting the inclusion of a broader range of phenomena and personnel, it would recognize the complexity of existing power relationships and undermine the tendency to construct artificial distinctions between a reified state and the society in which it is located.<sup>59</sup> More important, for our purposes, it would also undermine any tendency to construct historical narratives based on the evolution of that state.

### *The Sonderweg and the Presumption of Ottonian Success*

If modern interpretations of Ottonian history have been influenced by underlying and perhaps unacknowledged assumptions regarding the character of medieval politics and the state, they may also have been affected by assumptions regarding Germany's historical passage from the Middle Ages to modernity. According to Timothy Reuter, those assumptions have been most evident in the so-called 'medieval German *Sonderweg*'.<sup>60</sup> The term and concept 'Sonderweg' are more typically employed by historians concerned with later periods in European history, for whom they serve as a vehicle for explaining Germany's unique path to modernity

<sup>57</sup> See, e.g., Timothy Reuter, 'Property Transactions and Social Relations between Rulers, Bishops and Nobles in Early Eleventh-Century Saxony: The Evidence of the *Vita Meinweri*', in *Property and Power in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. by Wendy Davies and Paul Fouracre (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 165–99 (pp. 167, 175, 187, 193).

<sup>58</sup> Reuter, 'Nobles and Others', pp. 95–96. Given the evidence of violent resistance among slaves in the American south, we should not assume that weakness, even outright servitude, ruled out the possibility of defiance: see Steven Deyle, *Carry Me Back: The Domestic Slave Trade in American Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 247–75.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Davies, 'Medieval State', pp. 293–94.

<sup>60</sup> See above, note 31.

as well as its horrifying embrace of National Socialism.<sup>61</sup> In its medieval form, as suggested by Reuter, the 'Sonderweg' refers to events of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and is based on the undeniable fact that Germany did not develop the characteristics commonly associated with the modern state, or at least with the latter's early modern prototype. There was no hereditary rulership to ensure continuity, no hierarchically organized appellate jurisdiction, no salaried bureaucracy, and so on.<sup>62</sup> While English and French kings were centralizing power and administration, German kings surrendered power and independence to the aristocracy whose position was ensured by the archaic practice of the royal election. The political aspects of the *First European Revolution* had no relevance for the Empire, which did not experience the requisite 'intensification of government and the penetration of society by governmental power'.<sup>63</sup>

At the heart of this concept, the medieval German *Sonderweg*, there resides a teleology comparable to one embraced by our medieval counterparts. Just as historians in the Middle Ages viewed Christian salvation as the end result and causative factor in their reconstructions of the past, so advocates of the *Sonderweg* (and, to be fair, other historians as well) have viewed the modern nation-state implicitly as the fulfilment of theirs.<sup>64</sup> From this perspective, German history could be seen as something that went wrong, with the implication that historians needed to provide

<sup>61</sup> The unique organization of the Holy Empire, with its complicated sharing of power, was a source of interest, puzzlement, and concern to earlier generations of jurists and historians, but Napoleon's reorganization of Germany's political landscape and the abdication of Emperor Joseph II in 1806 generally shifted attention to the more specific question of German nationhood and Germany's exceptional history. Although its validity is a matter of vigorous debate among contemporary historians, the 'Sonderweg' appears to have retained its influence as a focal point of German historiography. On pre-Napoleonic views of the Empire, see, e.g., John G. Galiardo, *Reich and Nation: The Holy Roman Empire as Idea and Reality, 1763–1806* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980). Out of the vast literature concerned with the place of the 'Sonderweg' in modern German historiography, see perhaps Jürgen Kocka, 'Asymmetrical Historical Comparison: The Case of the German Sonderweg', *History and Theory*, 38 (1999), 40–50 (pp. 41–44); Hans-Ulrich Wehler, 'The German "Double Revolution" and the *Sonderweg*, 1848–1879', in *The Problem of Revolution in Germany, 1789–1989*, ed. by Reinhard Rürup (Oxford: Berg, 2000), pp. 55–65 (pp. 58–63).

<sup>62</sup> Reuter, 'Medieval German *Sonderweg*?', p. 180.

<sup>63</sup> R. I. Moore, *The First European Revolution, c.970–1215* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), p. 127.

<sup>64</sup> Reuter referred to this teleological character as a 'modernization paradigm.' See above, note 32.

an explanation.<sup>65</sup> For historians accustomed to viewing the modern state as the lynchpin of history, the results could take on a distinctly negative cast. In his study of the high medieval state, a work reportedly read at least once by every German medievalist, Heinrich Mitteis (1889–1952) described the decline of the German monarchy as ‘a deep tragedy, the tragedy of every authentic [example of] heroism’.<sup>66</sup> Mitteis’s historical vision appears to have been deeply affected by his country’s painful experiences in the First World War, but one did not have to be German to share his view of German medieval history.<sup>67</sup> In *The Origins of Modern Germany*, Geoffrey Barraclough (1908–84) associated the decline of Germany’s medieval monarchy with the ‘evils’ of decentralization, disunity, and unrestrained self-interest.<sup>68</sup> An American medievalist, James Westfall Thompson (1869–1941), referred to the transformation ‘of the once strong and magnificent German kingdom into a rope of sand, a confused and jarring chaos of small and warring states ruled by petty dynasts’.<sup>69</sup> Mitteis, Barraclough, and Thompson offered their assessments of medieval Germany’s fate at or prior to the middle of the twentieth century. But shorn of its more emotional elements, the grand narrative of the medieval Empire’s political decline can be found in more current literature as well, even if it is

<sup>65</sup> John Gillingham, *The Kingdom of Germany in the High Middle Ages* (London: Historical Association, 1971), p. 3. See also the assessment offered by Gerd Althoff, ‘Das ottonische Reich als regnum Francorum’, in *Deutschland und der Westen Europas*, ed. by Ehlers, pp. 235–61 (pp. 238–41).

<sup>66</sup> Heinrich Mitteis, *Der Staat des Hohen Mittelalters: Grundlinien einer vergleichenden Verfassungsgeschichte des Lehnseitalters*, 11th edn (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliches Buchgesellschaft, 1986), p. 123. On the popularity of Mitteis’s book, first published in 1940, see Peter Landau, ‘Heinrich Mitteis als deutscher Rechtshistoriker’, in *Heinrich Mitteis nach hundert Jahren (1889–1989)*, ed. by Peter Landau, Hermann Nehlsen, and Dietmar Willoweit, Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophische-Historische Klasse, Abhandlungen, n.s. 106 (Munich: Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1991), pp. 7–9.

<sup>67</sup> Karl Ferdinand Werner, ‘Der fränkisch-französische Königs- und Lehnstaat bei Heinrich Mitteis: Eine kritische Würdigung’, in *Heinrich Mitteis nach hundert Jahren*, ed. by Landau, Nehlsen, and Willoweit, pp. 23–46 (pp. 24, 44).

<sup>68</sup> Geoffrey Barraclough, *The Origins of Modern Germany*, 2nd edn (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1947), p. 246. This work was published prior to its author’s rejection of all national paradigms of historical analysis. For a brief biography of Barraclough, see Felice Lifschitz, ‘Geoffrey Barraclough’, in *Encyclopaedia of Historians and Historical Writing*, ed. by Boyd, I, 76–77.

<sup>69</sup> James Westfall Thompson, *Feudal Germany* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1928), p. xvi.

accompanied by recognition of other, ostensibly more positive, elements of German society.<sup>70</sup>

To associate Germany's apparent failure to develop a centralized, bureaucratic state with a more general trend of decline, one must accept that any right-minded medieval person would have appreciated the 'bureaucracies and the other tedious apparatus of modern government'.<sup>71</sup> This would seem a fairly questionable proposition. But there are other problems as well. On a more abstract level, the concepts modern and modernity are relative at best, and have meaning only in the presence of their archaic opposite. The model states of England and France were only relatively modern, and hence only relatively more 'modern', than the Empire.<sup>72</sup> Indeed, the precise moment at which Germany's history diverged from the path towards modern statehood has long been a matter of debate. Ranke thought the problem originated with the religious wars, which introduced foreign powers to Germany's political landscape, thereby endangering the nation's independence.<sup>73</sup> Bishop Stubbs (1825–1901), more pessimistic, believed that the fault lay in the nation's very foundations. In his view, 'the fact that Germany could be so easily and so generally broken up, show[ed] that [...] the crack and flaw was in the mass itself'.<sup>74</sup> Scholars concerned with more recent German history tend to focus on various dates in the nineteenth century.<sup>75</sup> If one need not rule out the possibility

<sup>70</sup> Michel Parisse, *Allemagne et empire au moyen âge* (Paris: Hachette, 2002), p. 257; Thomas Ertman, *Birth of the Leviathan: Building States and Regimes in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 224–37.

<sup>71</sup> Reuter, 'Medieval German *Sonderweg*?', p. 200.

<sup>72</sup> Ostensibly modern states of the late fifteenth century still exhibited many archaic characteristics: see Charles Tilly, 'The Long Run of European State Formation', in *Visions sur le développement des états Européens*, ed. by Blockmans and Genet, pp. 137–50 (p. 139). The contrast would be even less stark if we shifted our focus from the Empire to the German princely states, in which progress towards modern forms of government was more pronounced. See, e.g., Karin Nehlsen-von Stryk, 'The Centralization of Justice and the Formation of a Judicial Hierarchy in the Early Modern State: The Principality of Hesse', in *Legislation and Justice*, ed. by Antonio Padoa-Schioppa (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 131–57 (p. 131).

<sup>73</sup> Leopold von Ranke, *Deutsche Geschichte im Zeitalter der Reformation*, vol. v, ed. by Paul Joachimsen (Munich: Duncker & Humblot, 1925), p. 399. See also Liebersohn, 'German Historical Writing', p. 169.

<sup>74</sup> William Stubbs, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages, 476–1250*, ed. by Arthur Hassall (London: Longmans, Green, 1908), p. 106.

<sup>75</sup> See, e.g., Richard J. Evans, 'Whatever Became of the *Sonderweg*?', in his *Rereading German History: From Unification to Reunification, 1800–1996* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 12–22

that Germany's stunted political growth had deep roots in its medieval history, the distance between proposed cause and apparent consequence would still seem to violate what John Gaddis defines as the *principle of diminishing relevance*: 'the greater the time [separating] a cause from a consequence, the less relevant we presume that cause to be'.<sup>76</sup>

Insofar as Ottonian history is concerned, we might add a nuance to this critique. Failure, like modernity, is relative. People, institutions, countries, and the like cannot truly fail unless they have an example of success to measure themselves against. More to the point, if Germany can be said to have failed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, it must have been on the road to success prior to this. Here, we encounter what I will refer to as the 'Presumption of Ottonian Success', that is, the general belief that the Ottonian polity was on the path to integration, cohesion, and what have you, before the later Salians or the Staufer failed. As with the medieval *Sonderweg*, older scholarship tends to express this concept with fewer qualifications. Ranke described the Ottonian Empire as 'a new monarchy which rose up from the midst of the German nation, freed itself from the direct influence of the papacy and its minions, and placed the idea of the empire [. . .] on a new path'.<sup>77</sup> In a similar tone, Giesebrecht praised Emperor Otto I for being the first to unite the various German peoples into a single German nation; Ernst Dümmler (1830–1902) declared that the people of the *Reich*, invigorated during Otto's reign, first began to name and think of themselves as German.<sup>78</sup> According to some definitions, success also involved the capacity to project power. In his *History of the Age of the Saxon Emperors*, Robert Holtzmann (1874–1946) credited Otto I with having suppressed the forces of particularism and expanded the power of the *Reich* on every side.<sup>79</sup> Mitteis emphasized the Ottonian monarchy's predominance,

(p. 13); Lutz Niethammer, 'The German *Sonderweg* after Unification', in *Rewriting the German Past: History and Identity in the New Germany*, ed. by Reinhard Alter and Peter Monteath (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1997), pp. 129–51 (pp. 129–30).

<sup>76</sup> Gaddis, *Landscape of History*, p. 96.

<sup>77</sup> Leopold von Ranke, *Weltgeschichte*, 4th edn, 6 vols (Munich: Duncker & Humblot, 1921), III, 151.

<sup>78</sup> Von Giesebrecht, *Geschichte des deutschen Kaiserzeit*, II, 3; Rudolf Köpke and Ernst Dümmler, *Kaiser Otto der Grosse* (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1876; repr. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1962), p. 553. The comments regarding Otto I occur in the concluding section, composed by Köpke following the death of Dümmler.

<sup>79</sup> Robert Holtzmann, *Geschichte der sächsischen Kaiserzeit (900–1024)* (Munich: G. D. W. Callwey, 1941), p. 525.

absence of rivals, and ability to impose its will on all of Europe.<sup>80</sup> More recent assessments tend to express the idea of Ottonian hegemony in calmer, more abstract tones or support it implicitly by praising the accomplishments of individual rulers.<sup>81</sup> Likewise, German medieval scholarship continues to be influenced by the question of when German history began (the Ottonian era being the prime candidate), albeit with less intensity than in Ranke's era.<sup>82</sup>

Like the 'Medieval German *Sonderweg*', the 'Presumption of Ottonian Success' is no better or worse than any other scholarly construct, and it has proven its usefulness as a tool for investigating a topic that undoubtedly deserves investigation. But we might want to spend some time thinking about it. In historical terms, success and failure tend to be recognized only in retrospect. Capetian success in uniting France, for example, would scarcely have been obvious to tenth-century observers, especially given the signs that seemed to point in the opposite direction.<sup>83</sup> More or less the same comment would apply to conditions east of the Rhine. Thus Widukind of Corvey might praise the expansiveness of Otto I's power, but unlike his modern counterparts, who have sometimes voiced similar sentiments, he could not compare the conditions of Ottonian rule with those of later, arguably less successful periods of German history.<sup>84</sup> Nor, for that matter, could Widukind and his contemporaries have perceived the transition from the

<sup>80</sup> Mitteis, *Der Staat*, p. 107.

<sup>81</sup> Eduard Hlawitschka, *Vom Frankenreich zur Formierung der europäischen Staaten- und Völkergemeinschaft, 840–1046: Ein Studienbuch* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1986), p. 173; Helmut Beumann, *Die Ottonen*, 2nd edn (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1991), p. 9; Rudolf Schieffer, 'Der Platz Ottos des Großen in der Geschichte', in *Ottonische Neuanfänge*, ed. by Bernd Schneidmüller and Stefan Weinfürter (Mainz: Phillip von Zabern, 2001), pp. 17–35 (p. 25 and passim); Althoff, *Die Ottonen*, p. 68; Ertman, *Birth of the Leviathan*, p. 229; Johannes Laudage, *Otto der Grosse (912–973): Eine Biographie* (Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 2001), pp. 297–301.

<sup>82</sup> For a recent contribution to this debate, see Wilfried Hartmann, *Ludwig der Deutsche* (Darmstadt: Primus, 2002), pp. 5, 256–585. For an overview of the debate, see Joachim Ehlers, 'Die deutsche Nation des Mittelalters als Gegenstand der Forschung', in *Ansätze und Diskontinuität deutscher Nationsbildung im Mittelalter*, ed. by Joachim Ehlers, *Nationes: Historische und philologische Untersuchungen zur Entstehung der europäischen Nationen im Mittelalter*, 6 (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1989), pp. 11–58.

<sup>83</sup> Geoffrey Koziol, 'Political Culture', in *France in the Central Middle Ages, 900–1200*, ed. by Marcus Bull (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 43–76 (p. 44).

<sup>84</sup> Widukind, *Rerum Gestarum Saxonicarum libri tres* = *Die Sachsengeschichte des Widukind von Korvei*, ed. by Hans-Eberhard Lohmann and Paul Hirsch, MGH Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum, 60 (Hannover: Hahn, 1935), Bk I, 34, p. 48.

Carolingian era to that of the Ottonians with the clarity and sense of moment that modern scholars commonly bring to that event. Indeed, though Widukind provided a detailed description of the first Ottonian king's inauguration, he also proposed that a new political era had begun much earlier, in the ninth century, when the relics of St Vitus were translated from St Denis to the monastery of Corvey.<sup>85</sup> Although modern interpretations of Ottonian political history tend to place substantial, if not unequivocal faith in Widukind's testimony regarding the former event, they have lent little or no credence to his claims regarding the impact of the translation of St Vitus. Aside from the inevitable privileging of modern theories of periodization and causation over medieval ones, attempts to place the history of the Ottonian realm within a construct based on relative degrees of success or failure will rest on a more or less arbitrary and potentially anachronistic determination of what those terms mean within a medieval context.

### *Medieval Texts: Modern Readers*

Debates about the relationship between modern interpretations of the Middle Ages and the reality they claim to represent are, implicitly, debates about the protocols we employ when reading medieval texts. If historians tend to read those texts in light of protocols that exclude elements outside their 'professional belief system', as a recent study asserts, one might argue that similar protocols have reinforced historians' beliefs regarding the character and dynamics of medieval politics.<sup>86</sup> Insofar as Ottonian historical writing is concerned, the challenge is to read our texts without assuming that their authors foresaw the benefits of the modern state or could judge the success or failure of their polity with the benefit of hindsight, as modern historians do. Although virtually any text would qualify as a test case, I will focus on the works of a group of historians who wrote during a period bracketed by the reigns of the emperors Otto II (973–83) and Henry II (1002–24). This group includes Thietmar of Merseburg, author of the *Chronicon*, and Brun of Querfurt, who compiled a biography of Bishop Adalbert of Prague, in two versions, and the *Life of the Five Brothers*, an account of the martyrdom of a group of missionaries in Poland.<sup>87</sup> Also

<sup>85</sup> To quote Widukind's familiar phrasing: 'from that time, the power of the Franks began to decline, that of the Saxons to increase': *Rerum Gestarum Saxoniarum libri tres*, Bk I, 34 (p. 48).

<sup>86</sup> Stein, 'Literary Criticism', p. 71.

<sup>87</sup> Thietmar, *Chronicon* = *Die Chronik des Bischofs Thietmar von Merseburg und ihre Korveier Überarbeitung*, ed. by Robert Holtzmann, MGH Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum, n.s., 9 (Berlin:

included are the anonymous authors of the *Quedlinburg Annals* and of the two biographies of Queen Mathilda, wife of the first Ottonian ruler, Henry I.<sup>88</sup> These texts have long been available in modern scholarly editions, and historians commonly employ them as the basis for a master narrative of Ottonian history. To borrow a phrase from Timothy Reuter, 'there is little [here] which has not been chewed over thoroughly'.<sup>89</sup> Still, the masticated character of the sources need not diminish opportunities for new readings; by encouraging alternative approaches, such opportunities might even be enhanced.

Thietmar, Brun, the Quedlinburg Annalist, and the biographers of Queen Mathilda shared an association with the region of Saxony, a heartland of Ottonian rulership, and with communities defined by their close economic and legal ties to the monarchy.<sup>90</sup> Thietmar, a member of the comital house of Walbeck, was educated in the Saxon religious communities of Quedlinburg, Berge, and Magdeburg. He held a canonry at Magdeburg until 1009, when he was elevated to the episcopate as Bishop of Merseburg.<sup>91</sup> Brun, Thietmar's cousin and scion of the comital house of Querfurt, was educated in the cathedral school at Magdeburg and later served as a royal chaplain under Otto III.<sup>92</sup> We know little or nothing about the

Weidmann, 1935; repr. Munich: MGH, 1996); Brun of Querfurt, *Vita sancti Adalberti (redactio longior)*, ed. by Jadwiga Karwasinska, *Monumenta Poloniae Historica*, n.s., 4.2 (Warsaw: Pwn, 1969), pp. 3–41; (*redactio brevior*), pp. 45–69; Brun of Querfurt, *Vita quinque fratrum eremitarum*, *Monumenta Poloniae Historica*, n.s., 4.3 (Warsaw: Pwn, 1973), pp. 27–84.

<sup>88</sup> *Annales Quedlinburgenses* = *Die Annales Quedlinburgenses*, ed. by Martina Giese, MGH *Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum*, 72 (Hannover: Hahn, 2004); *Vita Mathildis reginae antiquior* = *Die Lebensbeschreibungen der Königin Mathilde*, ed. by Bernd Schütte, MGH *Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum*, 46 (Hannover: Hahn, 1994), pp. 109–42; *Vita Mathildis reginae posterior* = *ibid.*, pp. 145–202.

<sup>89</sup> Timothy Reuter, *Germany in the Early Middle Ages, c. 800–1056* (London: Longman, 1991), p. 2.

<sup>90</sup> Modern scholarship commonly identifies the region of Saxony as a *kernlandschaft* of the Ottonian monarchy, which is to say that it was an area in which a large amount of the monarchy's wealth and resources were concentrated: see John W. Bernhardt, *Itinerant Kingship and Royal Monasteries in Early Medieval Germany, c.936–1075*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, 4th Series, 21 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 61.

<sup>91</sup> On Thietmar, see David A. Warner, 'Thietmar, Bishop and Chronicler', in his *Ottonian Germany: The Chronicon of Thietmar of Merseburg* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001), pp. 1–64 (pp. 49–62).

<sup>92</sup> On Brun's life and career, see Ian Wood, *The Missionary Life: Saints and the Evangelisation of Europe, 400–1050* (Harlow: Longman, 2001), pp. 227–33.

Quedlinburg Annalist and the two biographers of Queen Mathilda, but it is generally assumed that the former was associated with the house of canonesses at Quedlinburg and that the latter were also associated with that community or with the house of canonesses at Nordhausen.<sup>93</sup> In terms of their motivation, these writers tend to express the more or less standard array of teleological and propagandistic *causae*. Brun and the biographers of Mathilda emphasized the edifying effects of models and the patronage of saints.<sup>94</sup> Thietmar, more prosaically, declared his intention to recount 'the lives and mores of the pious kings of Saxony', and to 'speak of the establishment and destruction of [his church of Merseburg], and of those happy years in which it was repaired'.<sup>95</sup> Beyond this, he hoped that readers would pray for his sins.

If read strictly in terms of the motives revealed by their authors, these texts would have only limited relevance for the types of questions that typically concern modern readers. Mainstream historians tend to avoid arguments centring on the efficacy of prayer and the moral character of rulership. Thietmar's partisan approach to the history of kings and churches would prevent most historians from reading his text in the absence of a critical screen. And yet, in moving beyond such motives and perspectives, modern readers may bring their own motives and perspectives into question. Indeed, some of the controversies currently surrounding these texts say as much about the unspoken assumptions of modern readers as they do about the texts themselves. In the case of Thietmar's *Chronicon*, for example, debate has focussed on the relationship between an incomplete autograph, produced under the author's supervision, and a more complete, but obviously altered version of the text produced in the twelfth century by the monks at Corvey.<sup>96</sup> In

<sup>93</sup> On the Annalist, see Giese's introduction to the most recent edition of the *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, pp. 57–66.

<sup>94</sup> Brun of Querfurt, *Vita quinque fratrum eremitarum*, prologue, p. 27 (models); *Vita sancti Adalberti (redactio longior)*, c. 34, p. 41, *Vita sancti Adalberti (redactio brevior)*, c. 34, p. 69 (patronage); *Vita Mathildis reginae antiquior*, prologue, p. 109, *Vita Mathildis reginae posterior*, p. 145 (models).

<sup>95</sup> Thietmar, *Chronicon*, Bk 1, prologue, p. 3.

<sup>96</sup> The standard edition by Holtzmann provides the autograph and Corvey-version on facing pages. Taking issue with the hitherto prevailing view, Hartmut Hoffmann has argued that many, if not necessarily all of the alterations and additions evident in the Corvey edition reflect Thietmar's own revisions rather than being the work of some anonymous twelfth-century editor: *Mönchskönig und rex idiota: Studien zur Kirchenpolitik Heinrichs II. und Konrads II.*, MGH Studien und Texte, 8 (Hannover: Hahn, 1993), pp. 151–76. Comparable claims have been raised in support of other, post-eleventh-century manuscripts of the *Chronicon* as well as for ostensibly independent works,

the case of the two biographies of Queen Mathilda, as already noted, opinion is divided as to whether the authors should be associated with the community of Quedlinburg or with Nordhausen, each affiliation being supportable from evidence in the text.<sup>97</sup>

In essence, the debate regarding Thietmar's *Chronicon* focuses on the goal of obtaining a text that comes as close as possible to the author's original intent. In a culture of handwritten books, such pure texts are a rare find, but the value that modern researchers place on them has more to do with post-medieval editorial practices than with the concerns of tenth-century authors.<sup>98</sup> Given that it reflects the work of at least eight scribes and includes numerous additions and corrections by Thietmar himself, even Thietmar's autograph might not qualify as a pure text. At which stage of its evolution did the manuscript truly reflect Thietmar's intent? As for the two biographies of Queen Mathilda, ambiguity regarding the authors' place of residence is only an issue if these texts are viewed as manifestations of a community's collective memory rather than unique expressions of the author's intellect.<sup>99</sup> Given

such as the *Analista Saxo*, that were based on Thietmar's text. See, e.g., Klaus Naß, *Die Reichschronik des Annalista Saxo und die sächsische Geschichtsschreibung im 12. Jahrhundert*, MGH Schriften, 41 (Hannover: Hahn, 1996), pp. 146, 168–71, 178.

<sup>97</sup> For a summary of the dispute, see Sean Gilsdorf's introduction to *Queenship and Sanctity: The Lives of Mathilda and the Epitaph of Adelheid* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2004), pp. 16–17.

<sup>98</sup> See Rudolf Schieffer, 'Zur Dimension der Überlieferung bei der Erforschung narrativer Quellen des Mittelalters', in *Von Fakten und Fiktionen*, ed. by Laudage, pp. 63–77 (p. 70). In general see also Lars Boje Mortensen, 'Change of Style and Content as an Aspect of the Copying Process: A Recent Trend in the Study of Medieval Latin Historiography', in *Bilan et perspectives des études médiévales en Europe*, ed. by Jacqueline Hamesse (Louvain-la-Neuve: Université Catholique de Louvain, 1995), pp. 265–76 (pp. 266–67).

<sup>99</sup> The concept of collective historical memory, derived in part from the sociological studies of Maurice Halbwachs (1914–45), assumes that individual memories reflect 'the totality of thoughts common to a group': Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, ed. and trans. by Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1992), p. 52. The passage cited appeared in *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire*, originally published in 1941. On the influence of Halbwachs on historical scholarship, see Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance*, pp. 11–13. Whether associated with Halbwachs or not, the assumption that social groupings of all types formed their identities around a shared interpretation of their common history figures among the core assumptions of current scholarly practice and of medieval scholarship, in particular. See, e.g., Rosamond McKitterick, *History and Memory in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) pp. 2–3; Elisabeth van Houts, *Memory and Gender in Medieval Europe, 900–1200* (Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1999), pp. 66–69.

the limited number of Ottonian narrative sources, it may be tempting to assume that the few which survive represent the common opinion of specific communities, but exploiting this assumption involves a methodological leap of faith. To the extent that the existence of collective memory must be assumed as a prerequisite for a specific text's interpretation as an expression of it, this line of reasoning has an inherently circular quality. That quality is heightened if both individual memories and the totality of a community's thoughts must be inferred from the same text. Nor does reference to tone or content necessarily compensate for such a deficit. Rather than proving that a text is the product of collective memory, a highly partisan approach to a community's history might represent an effort to impose a minority opinion or to conceal the existence of minority opinions.<sup>100</sup> More to the point, even if one assumes that the Annalist accurately reflects the collective memory of the community at Quedlinburg, the absence of a comparable point of reference for Nordhausen, other than the biographies themselves, will hinder any attempt to associate the authors of those texts exclusively with one community or the other.

Without diminishing the importance of networks of relatives, friends, and allies as the 'archimedian point' upon which many aspects of early medieval society rested, there is no compelling reason to assume, a priori, that people of the tenth century were any more dominated by collectivist sentiment or less aware of themselves as individuals than their counterparts in any other era of the Middle Ages.<sup>101</sup> Indeed, in the case of learned clergy, participation in a vital intellectual life centred on cathedral and monastic schools may have actually heightened their sense of individual identity.<sup>102</sup> Thietmar's *Chronicon* includes biographies of the teachers

<sup>100</sup> David A. Warner, 'Ritual and Memory in the Ottonian Reich: The Ceremony of *Adventus*', *Speculum*, 76 (2001), 255–83 (pp. 276–81).

<sup>101</sup> Cf. Gerd Althoff, *Verwandte, Freunde und Getreue: Zum politischen Stellenwert der Gruppenbindungen im früheren Mittelalter* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1990), p. 2. The assumption that medieval people were so dominated by communal, anti-individualistic thinking that a concept of the self was impossible, or at least inexpressible, appears to have been largely abandoned. This change in viewpoint is emphasized, for example, by Michael Clanchy, 'Documenting the Self: Abelard and the Individual in History', *Historical Research*, 76 (2003), 293–309 (p. 296).

<sup>102</sup> Increasingly, the tenth and early eleventh centuries are viewed as a time in which education enjoyed a renewal and, in particular, as a time in which classical texts came to play a much more central role in the curriculum than had previously been the case. See Birger Munk Olsen, 'Les classiques au X<sup>e</sup> siècle', in *Lateinische Kultur im X. Jahrhundert*, ed. by Walter Bershin (Stuttgart: A. Hiersemann, 1991), pp. 341–47 (p. 347); Louis Holtz, 'Les nouvelles tendances de la pédagogie

at the Magdeburg cathedral school and alumni notes of the old boys.<sup>103</sup> Brun, another old boy from Magdeburg, notes that the students customarily read together, that instruction took place exclusively in Latin, and that the rod was applied liberally.<sup>104</sup> Hinting at a new, conflicted identity that emerged in the process, he notes that the young Adalbert responded to a beating by pleading for mercy in Latin, then in Saxon dialect, and finally in Slavonic.<sup>105</sup> Students at monastic schools appear to have been no less taken with the life of the mind than their counterparts at the cathedrals and experienced a comparable process of socialization.<sup>106</sup> If nothing else, both monks and clerics shared the fundamental experience

grammaticale au X<sup>e</sup> siècle', in *ibid.*, pp. 163–73 (p. 164); and in general, Rosamond McKitterick, 'Ottonische Kultur und Bildung', in *Otto der Grosse: Magdeburg und Europe*, ed. by Mathias Puhle, 2 vols (Mainz: Zabern, 2001), I, 209–24. On the schools of tenth- and eleventh-century Germany, in general, see C. Stephen Jaeger, *The Envy of Angels: Cathedral Schools and Social Ideals in Medieval Europe, 950–1200*, Middle Ages Series (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), pp. 36–52; and Joachim Ehlers, 'Dom- und Klosterschulen in Deutschland und Frankreich im 10. und 11. Jahrhundert', in *Schule und Schüler im Mittelalter: Beiträge zur europäischen Bildungsgeschichte des 9. bis 15. Jahrhunderts*, ed. by M. Kintzner, Sönke Lorenz, Michael Walter, and others (Cologne: Böhlau, 1996), pp. 29–52 (pp. 42–51). On the socialization process of life at Ottonian schools, see C. Stephen Jaeger, *Ennobling Love: In Search of a Lost Sensibility* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), pp. 59–81.

<sup>103</sup> Thietmar's memories of teachers and students at Magdeburg are discussed in David A. Warner, 'Thietmar of Merseburg: The Image of the Ottonian Bishop', in *The Year 1000: Religious and Social Response to the Turning of the First Millennium*, ed. by Michael Frassetto (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 85–110 (pp. 98–99).

<sup>104</sup> Brun of Querfurt, *Vita sancti Adalberti (redactio longior)*, c. 7, p. 6.

<sup>105</sup> Brun of Querfurt, *Vita sancti Adalberti (redactio longior)*, c. 7, p. 6. Alongside this anecdote, we might place a somewhat later complaint from a student at Hildesheim, that he had been persecuted by the other students because he spoke his own dialect rather than switching to Saxon, thereby daring to be what God had made him. Hildesheimer Briefe ep. 39, in *Briefsammlungen der Zeit Heinrichs IV*, ed. by Carl Erdmann and Norbert Fickermann, MGH Die Briefe der deutschen Kaiserzeit, 5 (Weimar: Hermann Böhlau Nachfolger, 1950), pp. 82–83.

<sup>106</sup> Like students at Magdeburg, alumni of the school at St Gall recalled their student days with affection and continued to identify with them, whether or not they remained within a monastic community: Anna A. Grotans, *Reading in Medieval St. Gall*, Cambridge Studies in Palaeography and Codicology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 49–109; Christoph Dette, 'Schüler im frühen und hohen Mittelalter: Die St. Galler Klosterschule des 9. und 10. Jahrhunderts', *Studien und Mitteilungen zur Geschichte des Benediktinerordens und seiner Zweige*, 105 (1994), 7–63. On the common curriculum of monastic and cathedral schools, see Günter Glauche, *Schullektüre im Mittelalter: Entstehung und Wandlungen des Lektürekansons bis 1200 nach den Quellen dargestellt* (Munich: Arbo-Gesellschaft, 1970), pp. 62–100.

of learning to read, a task that not only exposed them to common entry texts, such as Donatus and Priscian, but also inculcated common patterns of thought inherent in the study of *grammatica*.<sup>107</sup> The possibility that learned clergy, the product of Ottonian schools, may have defined their identities in ways that competed with any inclination towards self-effacement need not have any dramatic impact on modern readings of Ottonian historical writing.<sup>108</sup> But it should suggest the futility of imposing modern, reductionist constructs on phenomena, such as personal identity, that were inherently complex and subjective.

In another context, I have suggested that the capacity of Ottonian *litterati* for sophisticated thought, especially in the area of political thought, may have been unfairly diminished by the common resort to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries as point of comparison.<sup>109</sup> Generalizing on this point, one might argue that any attempt to evaluate an era in qualitative terms will require a point of reference based on the values and assumptions of the interpreter's own era. To cite an obvious example, one cannot discover a medieval renaissance in the twelfth, or any other, century unless one has first decided what a renaissance is.<sup>110</sup> One might say much the same about modern efforts to investigate the medieval state, an institution whose constructed character is now widely recognized.<sup>111</sup> Insofar as the state can be equated with the deeds and policies of kings, an abiding interest in that institution is evident throughout the texts that concern us, sometimes accompanied by a triumphant tone, suggesting deep affinity with the dynasty that presided over it.<sup>112</sup> But there is also evidence of deep anxiety, revealed in a kind of nostalgia for better

<sup>107</sup> Suzanne Reynolds, *Medieval Reading: Grammar, Rhetoric and the Classical Text* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 10–11. On grammar, in particular, see Martin Irvine, *The Making of Textual Culture: 'Grammatica' and Literary Theory, 350–1100* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 1–8, 75–87.

<sup>108</sup> It is virtually indisputable that medieval histories, including the Ottonian variety, tended to coalesce around the perceived needs of institutions, peoples, and communities. See Bernd Schneidmüller, 'Constructing the Past by Means of the Present: Historiographical Foundations of Medieval Institutions, Dynasties, Peoples and Communities', in *Medieval Concepts of the Past: Ritual, Memory, Historiography*, ed. by Gerd Althoff, Johannes Fried, and Patrick Geary (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 167–92 (p. 168). But see the more cautious formulation by McKitterick, *History and Memory in the Carolingian World*, p. 3.

<sup>109</sup> Warner, 'Thietmar of Merseburg', pp. 89–90.

<sup>110</sup> E.g. R. N. Swanson, *The Twelfth-Century Renaissance* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 1–7.

<sup>111</sup> See above, note 33.

<sup>112</sup> E.g. Thietmar, *Chronicon*, Bk 1, prologue, p. 3.

times in the past and a correspondingly ambivalent attitude towards contemporary situations.<sup>113</sup> Ineffective or unjust wars, short-sighted or immoral diplomatic manoeuvring, and high-handed treatment of the property or customs of religious communities come in for sharp, even passionate criticism.<sup>114</sup> A tendency to ignore the results of episcopal and abbatial elections in the interest of reform or simply to reward a loyal servant provokes comparable sentiments.<sup>115</sup> Anxiety could also be generated by royal patronage and visitations, seemingly more positive aspects of the monarch's attention.<sup>116</sup> Although the ability of Ottonian monarchs to create a stable and effective royal administration by exploiting the resources of the Church is commonly viewed as evidence of their success, clearly our informants did not appreciate this success and could not image any grand narrative of state-formation in which success (or failure) may have played a part.<sup>117</sup>

In light of their regional and institutional affiliations, Thietmar and the other writers may have had good reason to concern themselves with the deeds of kings, but any attempt to characterize that concern will, of necessity, invoke modern assumptions regarding power, government, and their inherently subjective effect upon specific individuals. From the perspective of the social sciences, relations based on power must always involve an 'or else', which is to say a threat that is at least implied and involves a penalty sufficiently unpleasant as to make resistance unattractive.<sup>118</sup> Although several of the works with which this essay is concerned refer to royal sponsorship or invite the ruler's scrutiny, each a common *topos*

<sup>113</sup> Nostalgia for the golden age of Otto I is evident in the works of Brun of Querfurt (*Vita sancti Adalberti (redactio longior)*, c. 9, p. 8) and Thietmar (*Chronicon*, Bk 2, 44, 45, pp. 92–94, and Bk 6, 48, p. 334).

<sup>114</sup> *Vitae Mathildis reginae antiquior*, c. 15, p. 139 (regarding Otto I's Italian campaigns); *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, s.a. 1005, pp. 522–23, Brun of Querfurt, *Vita sancti Adalberti (redactio longior)*, c. 10, pp. 8–10, Thietmar, *Chronicon*, Bk 5, c. 10, p. 232 (regarding Ottonian campaigns against the Slavs and diplomatic relations with Slavic princes).

<sup>115</sup> Thietmar, *Chronicon*, Bk 4, c. 10, p. 142, Brun of Querfurt, *Vita sancti Adalberti (redactio longior)*, c. 12, pp. 13–15 (Merseburg); Thietmar, *Chronicon*, Bk 3, c. 12, p. 112, *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, s.a. 1013, pp. 536–37 (episcopal elections); Thietmar, *Chronicon*, Bk 7, c. 13, p. 412, *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, s.a. 1004, p. 522 (monastic reform). Brun of Querfurt felt anxious about royally sponsored monastic reform, but chiefly because of the danger it posed to the spiritual peace of the reformers themselves (*Vita quinque fratrum eremitarum*, c. 2, p. 32).

<sup>116</sup> E.g. *Vita Mathildis reginae antiquior*, c. 15, pp. 139–41 (patronage); Brun of Querfurt, *Vita quinque fratrum eremitarum*, c. 2, p. 34 (visitations).

<sup>117</sup> Cf. Fried, *Formierung*, p. 58.

<sup>118</sup> Poggi, *Forms of Power*, p. 10.

among medieval writers, there is no concrete evidence to suggest how sponsorship would have worked, assuming that it existed.<sup>119</sup> It might be assumed that favourable views of a ruler's *gesta* would be likely to produce correspondingly positive results for a writer or community, but this would be an assumption only. Arguments that writers would not have dared to produce something that displeased their royal sponsors are equally tenuous, being founded chiefly on a presumed but unsubstantiated obligation to obedience on the part of writers and their communities.<sup>120</sup> We have no evidence that writers were punished for saying the wrong thing, therefore they must have been saying the right thing. In the absence of an Ottonian *Leviathan*, capable of demanding and enforcing universal submission, these are essentially arguments from silence and inherently anachronistic.<sup>121</sup>

Rather than placing the authors of Ottonian historical writing on a landscape dominated by a centralized, hierarchical polity in a state of becoming, let us imagine them on one in which no centre of power was preordained to success or dominance. Let us imagine them, as well, on a landscape in which power, complex and multifaceted, found expression in forms that did not always coincide with ostensible rank and status. Such an approach would not necessarily yield a more accurate rendering of Ottonian history, but it might subvert some of the anachronistic assumptions that have hitherto defined such renderings. It might also open a path for new readings of a group of well-worked-over texts. With that in mind, I would like to conclude this essay by addressing a few assumptions relating to the importance of learned women in the Ottonian realm, a task suggested by the growing suspicion that the biographers of Queen Mathilda and the Quedlinburg Annalist may have been members of their respective communities, and hence canonesses.

<sup>119</sup> Körntgen, *Königsherrschaft*, pp. 35–53.

<sup>120</sup> For a particularly crisp formulation of this position see, for example, Ernst Karpf, 'Von Widukinds Sachengeschichte bis zu Thietmars Chronicon: Zu den literarischen Folgen des politischen Aufschwungs im ottonischen Sachsen', in *Angli e Sassoni al di qua e al di là del mare*, 2 vols, Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di Studi Medievali, 32 (Spoleto: CISAM, 1986), II, 547–80 (p. 568).

<sup>121</sup> Cf. Gerd Althoff, 'Geschichtsschreibung in einer oralen Gesellschaft: Das Beispiel des 10. Jahrhunderts', in *Ottonische Neuanfänge*, ed. by Schneidmüller and Weinfürter, pp. 151–70 (p. 154).

## *Women and History*

There is no major obstacle to the conclusion that the texts in question were compiled by women and much circumstantial evidence to support it. The argument that medieval misogyny would have hindered women's intellectual activity seems less than compelling. Even if the vocabulary and stereotypes remained constant, we need not consider that their content and impact was the same in the tenth century as it was, for example, at the end of the eleventh, after reformers had spent the better part of a century railing against married clergy.<sup>122</sup> In general, there is no longer any doubt that medieval women read and copied books, taught and learned, and engaged in intellectual discourse with men.<sup>123</sup> Some specifically female tasks may have provided a positive incentive to think about the past, creating a bond between history and gender.<sup>124</sup>

Aside from anachronistic assumptions regarding gender roles, there is no reason to assume that women would have lacked an interest in politics, as commonly defined, an activity in which they assumed key roles and the chief focal point of much Ottonian historical writing.<sup>125</sup> If the constructed character of Ottonian political history is accepted, moreover, any tendency to privilege activities in which women did not participate, such as warfare, over the less direct expressions of power in which they were prominent would appear equally questionable.<sup>126</sup> The Quedlinburg Annalist's assertion that Abbess Mathilda's accomplishments as

<sup>122</sup> Dyan Elliott, 'The Priest's Wife: Female Erasure and the Gregorian Reform', in *Medieval Religion: New Approaches*, ed. by C. H. Berman (New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 123–55 (pp. 123–26, 139–45).

<sup>123</sup> With specific reference to Germany and the Empire, see Alison Beach, 'Listening for the Voices of Admont's Twelfth-Century Nuns', in *Voices in Dialogue: Reading Women in the Middle Ages*, ed. by L. Olsen and K. Kerby-Fulton (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005), pp. 186–98 (pp. 188–90); and Beach, *Women as Scribes: Book Production and Monastic Reform in Twelfth-Century Bavaria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 8–31. On intellectual discourse between men and women, see Linda Olsen, 'Reading, Writing and Relationships in Dialogue', in *Voices in Dialogue*, ed. by Olsen and Kerby-Fulton, pp. 1–30 (pp. 5–7, 13–15).

<sup>124</sup> Van Houts, *Memory and Gender*, pp. 6–67.

<sup>125</sup> As the pioneering work of Karl Leyser has suggested, women of high status exercised a substantial influence, both political and cultural, in Ottonian Germany: Karl J. Leyser, *Rule and Conflict in an Early Medieval Society: Ottonian Saxony* (London: Arnold, 1979), pp. 48–73.

<sup>126</sup> In this respect, general comments by Wiesner-Hanks regarding the benefits of a broader definition of politics as power, rather than as formal authority exclusively, are particularly relevant. Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, *Gender in History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001), pp. 145–47.

Otto III's viceroy did as much to bring peace as the instruments of war, which she would have been perfectly capable of wielding, suggests that such privileging should, at the least, be qualified.<sup>127</sup> That communities of Ottonian canonesses were centres of intellectual activity is no longer in doubt. Whatever their situation, the obligation to pray and observe the liturgy required that canonesses learn to read, and this required teachers and texts, if not necessarily a formal school.<sup>128</sup> At the convent of Essen, in Saxon Westphalia, a student's letter, composed in the first half of the tenth century, not only verifies the existence of a school, but also suggests the activities that went on there: the study of grammar, reading, and chant.<sup>129</sup> There is also evidence for teaching and learning at Quedlinburg and Nordhausen. Thietmar of Merseburg learned his letters at Quedlinburg from an elderly aunt, noting that she had done a good job of it.<sup>130</sup> The Annalist praised two canonesses for their devotion to their studies.<sup>131</sup> The later biographer of Mathilda notes that the Queen made a point of inspecting the school at Nordhausen and examining each student.<sup>132</sup> One might quibble about the differences in facilities and types of education available at communities of women versus those of monasteries and cathedral schools. And yet, given our ignorance regarding the details of education in both men's and women's communities, we might just as easily emphasize what men and

<sup>127</sup> *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, s.a. 999, pp. 500–01.

<sup>128</sup> Thomas Schilp, *Norm und Wirklichkeit religiöser Frauengemeinschaften im Frühmittelalter: Die Institutio sanctimonialium Aquisgranensis des Jahres 816 und die Problematik der Verfassung von Frauenkommunitäten* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1998), pp. 82–83. There is some thought that the education of the young was seen as a special task of houses of canonesses and that this may explain the early proliferation of such houses in post-conversion Saxony: see Irene Crusius, 'Sanctimoniales quae se canonicus vocant: Das Kanonissenstift als Forschungsproblem', in *Studien zum Kanonissenstift*, ed. by Irene Crusius (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2001), pp. 9–38 (pp. 16–17, 20–22).

<sup>129</sup> In the letter, the student asks her teacher if she may observe the vigil with another teacher, promising that she will spend the time practising grammar, reading, and singing to God. The letter is preserved in Düsseldorf, Universitätsbibliothek, MS B3, fol. 305<sup>v</sup>. See Torsten Fremer, *Äbtissin Theophanu und das Stift Essen: Gedächtnis und Individualität in ottonisch-salischer Zeit* (Botrop: Peter Pomp, 2002), p. 42 and n. 237; and Hartmut Hoffmann, 'Das Skriptorium von Essen in ottonischer und frühsalischer Zeit', in *Kunst im Zeitalter der Kaiserin Theophanu*, ed. by Anton von Euw and Peter Schreiner (Cologne: Locher, 1993), pp. 113–53 (p. 114). Fremer gives the Latin text of the letter in her footnote.

<sup>130</sup> Thietmar, *Chronicon*, Bk 4, c. 16, p. 151.

<sup>131</sup> *Annales Quedlinburgenses*, s.a. 1022, pp. 569–70, 1023, p. 570.

<sup>132</sup> *Vita Mathildis reginae posterior*, c. 23, p. 193.

women had in common — the socializing experience of learning Latin, of reading scripture and the classics, and of growing intellectually.

If the alumni of monastic and cathedral schools could acquire a sense of identity based on the socializing effect of study and learning, there is evidence to suggest a similar reaction among their female counterparts. Whatever their own gender, Queen Mathilda's biographers expressed a striking joy and pride in learned women. The author of the earlier life noted that young Mathilda had been sent to the convent of Herford 'not so that she could be numbered among the nuns, but rather that she might be nourished in letters and handicrafts'.<sup>133</sup> Admonishing her like-named daughter, Abbess Mathilda of Quedlinburg, the Queen declared that she should 'fill her mind with holy scripture and teach others what she had read'.<sup>134</sup> While she was still serving as the Queen's chief aid, Abbess Ricburg of Nordhausen is said to have shared characteristics commonly associated with modern academics: she was absentminded, fell asleep at inopportune moments, and typically, was so engrossed in her reading that she neglected other responsibilities — specifically, her task of spotting appropriate recipients of the Queen's charity.<sup>135</sup> Learning also figures prominently in the later biography, but exclusively with regard to the Queen herself. It is noted that the young Mathilda came to Herford so that her grandmother, the Abbess, could supervise her education in sacred letters; and she is characterized as an accomplished student.<sup>136</sup> Reading could still prove distracting, but this time only for Mathilda.<sup>137</sup>

In this highly selective discussion of women and learning, one should find few if any surprises, and it provides no more than circumstantial evidence that the texts in question were compiled by women. Still, given the well-worked-over status of the topic and the likelihood that its historiography has been influenced by assumptions and constructs as potentially anachronistic as those discussed elsewhere in this essay, one might be justified in pursuing a somewhat different approach. In particular, rather than questioning whether or not the Quedlinburg Annalist and one or both of Queen Mathilda's biographers were women, we might follow the

<sup>133</sup> *Vita Mathildis reginae antiquior*, c. 2, p. 114.

<sup>134</sup> *Vita Mathildis reginae antiquior*, c. 13, p. 138.

<sup>135</sup> *Vita Mathildis reginae antiquior*, c. 9, p. 129.

<sup>136</sup> *Vita Mathildis reginae posterior*, c. 1, p. 148; c. 2, p. 151.

<sup>137</sup> The biographer notes that, while travelling, Mathilda was so intent on her reading that she might miss an opportunity to dispense alms to a pauper. It was still Ricburg's task to spot them for her, however, and she suffered the penalty for failing to do so: *Vita Mathildis reginae posterior*, c. 17, pp. 179–80. For further references to Mathilda's reading, see *ibid.*, c. 3, p. 151; c. 19, p. 182.

lead of scholars working in other periods of medieval history and consider the prospect that learned men and women formed a community in which intellect trumped gender in the same way that status and rank did. There is no lack of evidence for such a community. In his biography of St Adalbert, Brun suggests that the school master of Magdeburg visited and instructed women in nearby convents.<sup>138</sup> Walther of Speyer sent a letter to Hazicha, treasurer at Quedlinburg, in which he implies that she had studied in the schools at Speyer and under the direction of Bishop Baldric.<sup>139</sup> If we follow Harmut Hoffmann, the unique tenth-century manuscript of Hrotswitha's works was not copied at Gandersheim, but at Magdeburg, in the midst of the intellectual ferment we have already described, by six different, presumably male, scribes.<sup>140</sup> There are also connections among several of our writers that would assume a new significance if one or more of them were women. Both Thietmar and the author of the older life of Mathilda drew on the work of Widukind of Corvey.<sup>141</sup> Thietmar knew both the more recent biography of Queen Mathilda and the Quedlinburg Annals.<sup>142</sup> Thietmar resided at Quedlinburg until he was twelve years old. If he did not actually meet the Quedlinburg Annalist, he would have known canonesses who knew her. If the two biographers of Mathilda resided here, rather than Nordhausen, he may well have had contact with them as well.

At this point, I will concede the irony of what I have just proposed. In the body of this essay, I have examined the effects of modern metahistories and great stories against the backdrop of medieval and Ottonian historical writing. The grand narrative of state and national formation, Germany's special path to modernity, and the division of its history into periods of triumph and failure have been compared and, by implication, equated with medieval teleologies and self-serving propaganda. Although alternatives have been suggested, no conscious effort has been made to argue that they are anything more than provisional, as are all attempts to understand the past. Ottonian politics might be better imagined as an urban block-party,

<sup>138</sup> Brun of Querfurt, *Vita sancti Adalberti (redactio longior)*, c. 17, pp. 21–22.

<sup>139</sup> Walther of Speyer, *Epistola ad Hazecham*, ed. by Karl Strecker, MGH Poetae, 5. 1 [*Die Ottonenzeit*] (Hiersemann: Leipzig, 1937), pp. 63–64. Walter says that Hazecha composed the *vita* after leaving the school (*scolis egressa*) and seems to identify Baldric as her teacher (*tuum magistrum*) and, in the same breath, as his own tutor (*meumque [...] a parvo nutricium*).

<sup>140</sup> Hoffmann, 'Skriptorium von Essen', p. 115, n. 12.

<sup>141</sup> Johannes Laudage, 'Widukind von Corvey und die deutsche Geschichtswissenschaft', in *Von Fakten und Fiktionen*, ed. by Laudage, pp. 193–224 (p. 215, n. 20).

<sup>142</sup> See Holtzmann's comments in his introduction to the edition of the *Chronicon*, at p. 48.

with no entry fee or dress code, for example, rather than an orderly *pas de deux*! Should we expect learned historians of the Ottonian era to be any more consistent or free of conflicted identities than their modern counterparts? Hence, the irony. After devoting most of this essay to the task of identifying the unspoken assumptions that have guided our reading of Ottonian history, I am now proposing to add an assumption of my own. Clearly, the vision of an intellectual life of which educated women were an integral part rather than an add-on is no less dependent on modern assumptions and proclivities than the vision of a male-dominated, court-centred, warrior culture pursuing its *Sonderweg* towards modernity. In my defence, I would return to the interchange between Jesus and Matthew, as imagined by Nikos Kazantzakis. The point of the anecdote, as I see it, is that assumptions, constructs, and angelic truths are not only unavoidable, they are actually useful. Without them, we could scarcely make sense of the random events of history. And history that makes no sense may not be worth doing. Ultimately, we always write what the angel dictates. The only sin, if there is one, occurs when we fail to acknowledge that we have done so.

## THE KING AS JUDGE: HENRY II AND FREDERICK BARBAROSSA AS SEEN BY THEIR CONTEMPORARIES

Björn Weiler

The comparative history of medieval England and Germany was one of Timothy Reuter's abiding interests.<sup>1</sup> This concern reflects the fact that, despite sharing basic forms of political organization (both were monarchical societies, presided over by elites which defined themselves through their military or spiritual functions), as well as common beliefs about the nature and limitations of royal and noble power, how such abstract norms were turned into political reality

I should like to thank Peter Lambert for his comments on an earlier version of this paper, and for proving, beyond doubt, that pedantry can sometimes indeed be a virtue; and Nicholas Vincent, whose objections and criticisms have been much appreciated, and which have made this paper a much stronger one than it might otherwise have been. Timothy Reuter's 'Mandate, Privilege, Court Judgement: Techniques of Rulership in the Age of Frederick Barbarossa', in his *Medieval Politics and Modern Mentalities*, ed. by Janet L. Nelson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 413–31, only appeared after this paper had gone to press. While reaching a number of similar conclusions, Reuter was interested in the practice rather than, as is here the case, the image of royal justice.

<sup>1</sup> Timothy Reuter, 'Nur im Westen was Neues? Das Werden prämoderner Staatsformen im europäischen Hochmittelalter', in *Deutschland und der Westen Europas im Mittelalter*, ed. by Joachim Ehlers, Vorträge und Forschungen, 56 (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke, 2002), pp. 327–50; Reuter, 'The Making of England and Germany, 850–1050: Points of Comparison and Difference', in *Medieval Europeans: Studies in Ethnic Identity and National Perspective in Medieval Europe*, ed. by Alfred P. Smyth (London: Macmillan, 1998), pp. 53–70; Reuter, 'The Medieval German *Sonderweg*? The Empire and its Rulers in the High Middle Ages', in *Kings and Kingship in Medieval Europe*, ed. by Anne J. Duggan (London: Kings College London CLAMS, 1993), pp. 179–211; Reuter, 'Past, Present and No Future in the Twelfth-Century *Regnum Teutonicum*', in *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. by Paul Magdalino (London: Hambledon, 1992), pp. 15–36, all now reprinted in English in *Medieval Politics*, ed. by Nelson, Chapters 22, 16, 20, and 11 respectively.

could hardly have been more different. While the Norman and Angevin kings elaborated on the administrative apparatus of their Anglo-Saxon predecessors, the emperors relied on an informal network of alliances, with questions of honour and status, for instance, assuming a more significant role.<sup>2</sup> England thus witnessed the emergence of the bureaucratic kingship of the Exchequer, of the Pipe, Fine, Liberate, Charter, Close, Patent, and Curia Regis Rolls, of an administrative machinery rivalled only by that of the Norman kingdom of Sicily, the Italian communes, or the late medieval crown of Aragon. In Germany, by contrast, emperors had to rely increasingly on symbolic manifestations of power, just as their ability to influence and rule their princely subjects declined in real terms.<sup>3</sup> Things were, however, rarely as simple as modern academic paradigms would like them to be, and Reuter pointed, for instance, to the importance of rituals, gestures, and ceremonies, traditionally associated with French and German politics,<sup>4</sup> for the events of Henry II's reign.<sup>5</sup> In fact, as he suggested in one of his last published articles, such commonly accepted juxtapositions often reveal themselves to be little more than a convenient shorthand for more complex phenomena and processes, once they are viewed from a comparative perspective.<sup>6</sup>

This chapter will take up Timothy Reuter's suggestion and will look in more detail at one particular aspect of medieval political culture: the monarch's role as source and guarantor of justice. It will do so with reference to two individuals — Emperor Frederick Barbarossa (1152–90) and King Henry II (1154–89) — and by using a certain type of source: historical narratives, that is, chronicles, annals,

<sup>2</sup> As Tim Reuter had suggested in 'Medieval German *Sonderweg*'.

<sup>3</sup> Karl J. Leyser, *Rule and Conflict in an Early Medieval Society* (London: Arnold, 1979).

<sup>4</sup> Geoffrey Koziol, 'England, France, and the Problem of Sacrality in Twelfth-Century Ritual', in *Cultures of Power: Lordship, Status, and Process in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. by Thomas N. Bisson (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), pp. 124–48; Warren Hollister, 'Anglo-Norman Political Culture and the Twelfth-Century Renaissance', in *Anglo-Norman Political Culture and the 12th-Century Renaissance: Proceedings of the Borchard Conference on Anglo-Norman History, 1995*, ed. by C. Warren Hollister (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1997), pp. 1–16; Martin Aurell, *L'Empire des Plantagenêt 1154–1224* (Paris: Tempus, 2003), pp. 123–33; Amaury Chauou, *L'idéologie Plantagenêt: royauté arthurienne et monarchie politique dans l'espace Plantagenêt (XII–XIII siècles)* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2001).

<sup>5</sup> Timothy Reuter, 'Velle sibi fieri in forma hac: symbolisches Handeln im Becketstreit', in *Formen und Funktionen öffentlicher Kommunikation im Mittelalter*, ed. by Gerd Althoff (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke, 2001), pp. 201–25 (English version in *Medieval Politics*, ed. by Nelson, Chapter 10).

<sup>6</sup> Reuter, 'Nur im Westen was Neues?', *passim*, but see also his 'Medieval German *Sonderweg*', pp. 210–11.

and saints' lives. Upholding peace and justice was a ruler's foremost duty, but it was also in the administration and implementation of justice that the widely divergent mechanisms and tools at Frederick's and Henry's disposal can most easily be studied. One question we need to consider is, therefore, to what extent differences in governmental structure were reflected in representations of governmental practice. Medieval historians did, after all, offer an idealized image of the past. They sought to place events and actions in relation to a set of values and expectations they shared with those who commissioned or who read (or listened to) their writings, or who had produced similar texts themselves.<sup>7</sup> By exploring what they deemed worth reporting about the exercise of royal justice, we will be able to see the extent to which the very different frameworks of royal administration, within which they wrote, influenced their understanding of what justice was and how it was to be done. It is worth emphasizing that this essay is not concerned with the *reality* of royal or imperial justice,<sup>8</sup> but with its *image*. In fact, much of what follows will disregard aspects which we know to have formed part of the exercise of Henry's and Frederick's juridical functions. It is, however, in these omissions and misrepresentations that we will find echoes of what it was that those who recorded the doings of king and emperor believed king and emperor should do or have done. By focussing on the concept of royal justice, rather than its practice, we will be able to gain a better understanding of the wider cultural framework within which rulers acted, and of the norms according to which they were judged.

In doing so, we will also be able to fill a curious gap in our understanding of imperial and royal lordship. In the case of Frederick, recent studies of the representation and self-representation of the Emperor sidestep the ruler's juridical function.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, while excellent work has been done on the legal system that developed during Henry II's reign, relatively little has been said about the expectations of his subjects or the King's personal role in administering justice.<sup>10</sup> By approaching these

<sup>7</sup> Methodologically, this is indebted to František Graus, 'Die Herrschersagen des Mittelalters als Geschichtsquelle', in *Ausgewählte Aufsätze von František Graus (1959–1989)*, ed. by Hans-Jörg Gilomen, Peter Moraw, and Rainer C. Schwinges (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke, 2002), pp. 3–27.

<sup>8</sup> Which, in the German case, would also be made very difficult by the lack of administrative sources at our disposal. The problem is illustrated by Klaus Richter, *Friedrich Barbarossa hält Gericht: Zur Konfliktbewältigung im 12. Jahrhundert* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1999), which draws its evidence exclusively from the *Gesta Frederici*.

<sup>9</sup> Heinz Krieg, *Herrscherdarstellung in der Stauferzeit: Friedrich Barbarossa im Spiegel seiner Urkunden und der staufischen Geschichtsschreibung* (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke, 2003).

<sup>10</sup> John Hudson, *The Formation of the English Common Law: Law and Society in England from the Norman Conquest to Magna Carta* (London: Longman, 1996); R. C. van Caenegem, *The Birth*

questions from a comparative angle, we will also be able to gain a clearer understanding of what was distinctive about the Angevin and the Staufien experience of royal government, and what they had in common. The following will thus not, to borrow Nicholas Vincent's phrase, seek to turn the Angevins into Ottonians with Pipe Rolls.<sup>11</sup> We will, however, argue that the distinctions outlined above will need to be revised. What follows can be little more than a first step towards a more wide-ranging investigation and will have to limit itself to three overlapping themes. First, what did English and German observers mean by royal justice? Second, how did they expect justice to be done? What were the mechanisms and procedures they deemed appropriate? This will, finally, lead to a series of more wide-ranging questions about the nature of the evidence, and about the possible implications our findings might have beyond their immediate chronological and geographical focus.

### *Defining Justice*

English and German chroniclers alike ranked the maintaining of peace and the exercise of justice as the king's foremost duty. William of Newburgh, for instance, in describing the accession and early years of Henry II, outlined the expectations of his subjects: the King was to combine prudence and constancy with a zeal for justice.<sup>12</sup> Henry met these expectations by restoring the rigour of the law so successfully that 'those who acted like wolves either turned into sheep, or fled the realm'.<sup>13</sup> Henry of Huntingdon, similarly, praised the near-miraculous peace which had been brought about by Henry's imminent accession in 1154. Despite the fact that, with Stephen, his predecessor and erstwhile rival, dead and Henry's departure delayed

*of English Common Law*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); Richard Huscroft, *Ruling England, 1042–1217* (Harlow: Longman, 2005), especially pp. 176–87. See, however, J. E. A. Joliffe, *Angevin Kingship*, 2nd edn (London: A. and C. Black, 1963), especially pp. 50–109, and Graeme J. White, *Restoration and Reform 1153–1165: Recovery From Civil War in England*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, 4th Series, 46 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 161–212.

<sup>11</sup> Nicholas Vincent, 'The Pilgrimages of the Angevin Kings of England, 1154–1272', in *Pilgrimage: The English Experience from Becket to Bunyan*, ed. by Colin Morris and Peter Roberts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 12–45 (p. 40).

<sup>12</sup> William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum Anglicarum*, in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, ed. by Richard Howlett, 2 vols, *Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevii Scriptores* (London: Longman, Green, 1884–85), Bk II, ch. 1 (I, 101).

<sup>13</sup> William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum Anglicarum*, Bk II, ch. 1 (I, 102).

by hostile winds, England was without a king for six weeks, it did not lack in peace. Henry had thus achieved in his absence, and before he had even been crowned, what Stephen had failed to accomplish during his lifetime.<sup>14</sup> There was a panegyric element in Huntingdon's writing, intended as the final vindication of those who sided with Henry and his mother, the Empress Mathilda, against King Stephen.<sup>15</sup> Nonetheless, his emphasis on the unprecedented peace and stability which the mere expectation of Henry's accession brought with it points to the importance attached to this as a qualifying mark of successful kingship. Nor was this emphasis limited to accounts of Henry's early years. Ralph of Diss, for instance, described at length the administrative reforms undertaken by Henry in 1177–79: driven by a zeal for justice, the King had called on the sheriffs to investigate their handling of local affairs, ultimately resulting in the appointment of men who would put the enforcement of the law above material concerns, as Henry was intent on showing to his subjects that he cared that justice was done to each and every one of them.<sup>16</sup>

A superficially similar picture emerges from the German sources. Burchard of Ursberg, for instance, started his account of Barbarossa's reign with a list of the new King's many virtues, chief among them being his desire to pacify the princes of Germany.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, Otto of Freising claimed that Frederick's predecessor, Conrad III, had overruled the claims of his own son, Frederick of Rothenburg, in favour of Barbarossa, because the latter alone was able to restore peace and maintain justice throughout the realm.<sup>18</sup> As in the case of England, this emphasis on

<sup>14</sup> Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum: History of the English*, ed. by Diana Greenway (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), Bk X, ch. 40, pp. 776–77.

<sup>15</sup> David Crouch, *The Reign of King Stephen, 1135–1154* (London: Longman, 2000), p. 6; Björn Weiler, 'Kingship, Usurpation and Propaganda in Twelfth-Century Europe: The Case of Stephen', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 23 (2001), 299–326; White, *Restoration and Reform*, and Emilie Amt, *The Accession of Henry II in England: Royal Government Restored* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1993).

<sup>16</sup> *Radulfi de Diceto decani Lundoniensis Opera Historica*, ed. by William Stubbs, 2 vols, *Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevii Scriptores* (London: Longman, Green, 1876), I, 434–36.

<sup>17</sup> *Burchardi praepositi Urspergensis Chronicon*, ed. by Oswald Holder-Egger and Bernhard von Simson, *MGH Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum sep. ed.*, 16 (Hannover: Hahn, 1916), p. 23.

<sup>18</sup> *Otonis Episcopi Frisingensis et Rahewinis Gesta Frederici seu rectius Cronica*, ed. by Franz-Josef Schmale, trans. by Adolf Schmidt, *Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters*, 2nd edn (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1974), Bk I, ch. 71, pp. 278–81; Ulrich Schmidt, *Königswahl und Thronfolge im 12. Jahrhundert*, *Forschungen zur Kaiser und Papstgeschichte des Mittelalters. Beihefte zu J. F. Böhmer, Regesta Imperii*, 7 (Cologne: Böhlau, 1987), pp. 123–34; Jan Paul Niederkorn, 'Friedrich von Rothenburg und die Königswahl von 1152', in *Von*

peacemaking and the administration of justice extended well beyond the Emperor's early years.<sup>19</sup> Like his English counterpart, the Emperor was to guarantee (or restore) public order, justice, and the rule of law. Once we analyse the sources in greater detail, however, a more complex picture emerges, in terms of both those engaged in doing justice and what 'doing justice' entailed.

To begin with, in Germany peacekeeping functions were not limited to the king, but extended to all those who held secular power. We thus find language similar to Otto's and Burchard's description of Frederick in texts as varied as the *Historia Welforum*, a history of the Swabian Welfs centring on the family of Duke Welf VI (1115–91) — the Duke's son and namesake ruled his domains with constancy of mind, strict justice, and affability and defended his subjects against those who sought to oppress them<sup>20</sup> — or the anonymous *Gesta Treverorum Archiepiscoporum*, which singled out Archbishop Albero of Trier (1080–1152) for the fact that, during his episcopate, there were no wars and that his lands were thus never ravished.<sup>21</sup> By contrast, in English sources, prelates might be singled out for their courage in resisting royal encroachments upon ecclesiastical liberties, and abbots for defending their house's property against local lords and officials,<sup>22</sup> but they did not engage actively in the pursuit of criminals and peace breakers, unless called upon to do so by the king. Similarly, keeping the peace was not listed among the tasks and accomplishments of lay magnates. As far as the chroniclers were concerned, that was a task for kings alone.<sup>23</sup>

*Schwaben bis Jerusalem: Facetten staufischer Geschichte*, ed. by Sönke Lorenz and Ulrich Schmidt, Veröffentlichungen des Alemannischen Instituts, 61 (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1995), pp. 51–60.

<sup>19</sup> *Annales Marbacenses qui dicuntur (Cronica Hohenburgenses cum continuatione et additamentis Neoburgensibus)*, ed. by Hermann Bloch, MGH Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum sep. ed., 9 (Hannover: Hahn, 1907), p. 50; *Chronica S. Petri Erfordensis Moderna*, in *Monumenta Erphesfurtensia Saec. XII. XIII. XIV.*, ed. by Oswald Holder-Egger, MGH Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum, 42 (Hannover: Hahn, 1899), p. 185.

<sup>20</sup> *Historia Welforum*, ed. and trans. by Erich König, Schwäbische Chroniken der Stauferzeit (Stuttgart, 1938; repr. Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1978), c. 29, pp. 58–59. Matthias Becher, 'Welf VI, Heinrich der Löwe und der Verfasser der Historia Welforum', in *Die Welfen: Landesgeschichtliche Aspekte ihrer Herrschaft*, ed. by Karl-Ludwig Ay, Lorenz Maier, and Joachim Jahn (Constance: Universitätsverlag Konstanz, 1998), pp. 151–72.

<sup>21</sup> *Gesta Treverorum archiepiscoporum*, ed. by G. Waitz, MGH Scriptores, 24 (Hannover: Hahn, 1879), *Continuatio* III, p. 381.

<sup>22</sup> *Historia ecclesie Abendonensis: The History of the Church of Abingdon*, 2 vols, ed. and trans. by John Hudson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002–07), II, 241–42.

<sup>23</sup> To some outside observers, such as Gislebert de Mons, the fact that Henry did not allow his magnates to administer justice without royal licence ranked as a chief token of his tyranny. *La*

Moreover, maintaining the peace and doing justice meant different things to German and English observers. Let us begin by considering William of Newburgh's description of Henry's succession: the new King restored public order and the rule of law by expelling Stephen's Flemish mercenaries and by destroying or by claiming for himself castles built without licence. Most importantly however, he reformed the administration of justice and appointed suitable judges and ministers.<sup>24</sup> Similarly, Roger of Hoveden, when dealing with Henry's judicial reforms of 1178, described the royal concern for justice as manifesting itself in the selection of wise and prudent judges,<sup>25</sup> as did Ralph of Diss.<sup>26</sup> That is, some of the tasks Henry faced were similar to those Frederick had to shoulder, but, at least in the eyes of his subjects, erasing castles and expelling mercenaries was subsidiary to appointing suitable men to act on the King's behalf. This concern is reflected in a theme common in English historical writing, to which there is no equivalent in Germany: the need to control royal officials. The plottings and machinations of royal courtiers formed the theme of a whole subsection of literary activity, the most famous example being Walter Map's *De nugis curialium*. *De nugis* contains some traditional elements of *Hofkritik* — the spinning of intrigues, the jockeying for position, the courtly art of sycophancy — but goes beyond this in dealing specifically with the role of royal officials. It opens with a warning allegedly given by the Bishop of Lincoln to Henry II, that the doings of his agents endangered both their and the King's eternal salvation,<sup>27</sup> and

*Chronique de Gislebert de Mons*, ed. by Léon Vanderkindere, Recueil de textes pour servir à l'étude de l'histoire de Belgique (Brussels: Royal Historical Commission, 1904), p. 85.

<sup>24</sup> William of Newburgh, *Historia rerum Anglicarum*, Bk II, ch. 1, pp. 101–02; White, *Restoration and Reform*, pp. 169–99.

<sup>25</sup> *Gesta regis Henrici secundi Benedicti abbatis*, ed. by William Stubbs, 2 vols, *Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevii Scriptores* (London: Longman, Green, 1867–68), I, 207–08, 238–39.

<sup>26</sup> *Radulfi Opera*, I, 434–36.

<sup>27</sup> Walter Map, *De nugis curialium: Courtiers' Trifles*, ed. and trans. by M. R. James, revised by C. N. L. Brooke and R. A. B. Mynors, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), Distichon 1, c. 9, pp. 10–11. See generally Thomas Szabó, 'Der mittelalterliche Hof zwischen Kritik und Idealisierung', in *Curialitas: Studien zu Grundfragen der höfisch-ritterlichen Kultur*, ed. by Josef Fleckenstein (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1990), pp. 350–91; C. Stephen Jaeger, *The Origins of Courtliness: Civilizing Trends and the Formation of Courtly Ideals, 939–1210* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), pp. 54–66; and specifically Claus Uhlig, *Hofkritik im England des Mittelalters und der Renaissance: Studien zu einem Gemeinplatz der europäischen Moralistik* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1973); Egbert Türk, 'Nugae Curialium': *Le règne d'Henri II Plantagenêt (1145–1189) et l'éthique politique* (Geneva: Droz, 1977), pp. 158–77; Türk, 'Curialis Nugator – Il perfetto cortegiano: deux manières d'appréhender une même réalité sociale', in *La cour Plantagenêt: Actes du Colloque tenu à Thouars du 30 Avril au 2 mai 1999*,

it ends with a caveat to all kings: they must be ever-vigilant and never allow their officials to act without close supervision.<sup>28</sup> Similar concerns were voiced by Gervase of Canterbury: on Henry II's accession, Archbishop Theobald, 'seeing the inveterate malice and the insatiable greed of the courtly wolves (*luporum aulicorum*), feared for the young boy, and feared for himself. The Archbishop therefore undertook strenuous efforts to find suitable advisors for the King.<sup>29</sup> Contemporary English observers clearly attached much greater importance to the royal court, and the need to control its members, than their German counterparts.

This was not, however, the only difference. Otto of Freising reports how, during Frederick's coronation in 1152, a *ministerialis*, or unfree knight, approached the King. In disgrace for some unspecified crime, he threw himself at the ruler's feet in the hope of regaining the King's favour. Frederick, though, remained unmoved, not, as Otto stresses, out of hatred, but in order to maintain justice. Neither the pleadings of the princes, nor the use of fine words and the offer of presents could change the King's mind. Barbarossa's ploy worked: those witnessing the exchange were astonished that so young a man maintained such constancy of justice.<sup>30</sup> For our purposes, the key feature of this encounter was the means which Frederick Barbarossa selected to demonstrate his exercise of justice: by a public and symbolic act of rejection. That Otto used this sort of public display to have Frederick make this point is significant: there were no royal officials who could, or who were expected to, perform this function on the monarch's behalf.<sup>31</sup> What had happened in 1152 was thus by

ed. by Martin Aurell (Poitiers: University of Poitiers Press, 2000), pp. 217–28; Björn Weiler, 'Royal Justice and Royal Virtue in William of Malmesbury's *Historia Novella* and Walter Map's *De Nugis Curialium*', in *Virtue and Ethics in the Twelfth Century*, ed. by István Béczy and Richard Newhauser (Leiden: Brill, 2005), pp. 317–39.

<sup>28</sup> Map, *De nugis curialium*, Distichon 5, c. 6, pp. 510–13.

<sup>29</sup> *The Historical Works of Gervase of Canterbury*, ed. by William Stubbs, 2 vols, *Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevii Scriptores* (London: Longman, Green, 1879–80), 1: *Chronica*, i, p. 160.

<sup>30</sup> Otto of Freising, *Gesta Frederici*, Bk II, ch. 3, pp. 286–87, 288–89. Note a similar story about King Louis VII of France reported by Walter Map: *De nugis curialium*, Distichon 5, c. 5, pp. 442–46. There, however, Louis was eventually swayed by the intercession of the culprit's wife. The episode is also reminiscent of a similar encounter reported by Wipo in the eleventh century. Wipo, *Gesta Chuonradis imperatoris*, in *Wiponis Opera*, ed. by Harry Bresslau, *MGH Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum sep. ed.*, 61, 3rd edn (Hannover: Hahn, 1915), pp. 26–27. Otto may have taken the precedent of Conrad to express a stricter understanding of royal justice, as suggested by Gerd Althoff, *Die Macht der Rituale: Symbolik und Herrschaft im Mittelalter* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2003).

<sup>31</sup> The situation was a slightly different one in Italy: *Burchardi Chronicon*, pp. 30–31.

no means an isolated incident.<sup>32</sup> This is not to argue that English royal justice was not also public (in fact, we will encounter several examples showing that it was). Its public manifestation was, however, subsumed in a more elaborate emphasis on legal argument and precedent. There was, furthermore, an important difference between how Frederick expressed his desire to do justice and keep the peace (through a series of symbolic acts, which were not necessarily performed in conjunction with a formal process of reaching judgement) and how Henry II did so (by expelling Flemish mercenaries and by appointing suitable officials to act on his behalf). These distinctions, in turn, point to very different interpretations of what was meant when a ruler was described as doing justice and securing the peace.

The encounter during Barbarossa's coronation was embedded in a broader narrative of the King's early years, and there a further difference emerges: to Otto, maintaining the peace was less a matter of chasing after petty criminals, of seeing to it that evil men were brought to heel, murderers hanged, and other criminals imprisoned or marked by mutilation (which was how Ralph of Diss described maintaining public order in an English context),<sup>33</sup> than a question of settling rivalries and feuds. Barbarossa's early years were thus spent arbitrating between Henry the Lion and Henry Jasomirgott,<sup>34</sup> or the Archbishop of Mainz and Herman, the count palatine.<sup>35</sup> Like Henry II, Frederick excelled at these tasks and thus earned himself the epithet of *pater patriae*, father of the fatherland.<sup>36</sup> Matters do, however, become more complicated once we delve deeper into our sources. Otto of Freising, too, records Barbarossa as engaged in fighting evildoers. In 1148, for instance, that is, several years before he became King (1152), he had some *ministeriales* hanged for their crimes,<sup>37</sup> and on returning to Germany in 1155, the Emperor was actively engaged in destroying those castles whose lords had plundered and robbed their

<sup>32</sup> Otto of Freising, *Gesta Frederici*, Bk II, chs 48, 57, pp. 378–79, 388–91; *Catalogus archiepiscoporum Coloniensium, continuatio II*, ed. by H. Cardauns, MGH Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum, 24 (Hannover: Hahn, 1879), p. 345.

<sup>33</sup> *Radulfi Opera*, I, 434.

<sup>34</sup> Otto of Freising, *Gesta Frederici*, Bk II, chs 11–12, pp. 300–05; 44–45, pp. 370–79; 57, pp. 388–91.

<sup>35</sup> Otto of Freising, *Gesta Frederici*, Bk II, ch. 48, pp. 376–79.

<sup>36</sup> Otto of Freising, *Gesta Frederici*, Bk II, ch. 58, pp. 390–91. Intriguingly, this was a term also applied to Henry II: see Nicholas Vincent, 'Regional Variations in the Charters of King Henry II', in *Charters and Charter Scholarship in Britain and Ireland*, ed. by Judith Green and Marie Therese Flanagan (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 70–106.

<sup>37</sup> Otto of Freising, *Gesta Frederici*, Bk I, ch. 65, pp. 264–65.

neighbours.<sup>38</sup> These instances were, however, subordinate to the more important duties of a monarch. In 1148, Frederick simply did what any good lord should have done in his domains, and it was partly because of this strenuous pursuit of justice that he was eventually elected king. The destruction of castles in 1155, on the other hand, formed part of a series of episodes which underlined Frederick's role as a keeper of the peace, focussing primarily on the way he dealt with princes and nobles engaged in criminal activity. The pursuit of common criminals was below the dignity of an emperor, unless it involved his own dependants and *familia*. Much more important was his ability to arbitrate, to settle disputes and negotiate settlements between the princes of the realm.<sup>39</sup>

This is not to say that the Emperor was not to use force, but he normally did so only if previous efforts by local princes had been unsuccessful, as in 1162 in Alsace, when he settled feuds which no one had been able to end,<sup>40</sup> or if those directly under his protection were concerned, as in 1163, when he ordered the destruction of the houses of those *ministeriales* who had attacked the canons of Aachen cathedral.<sup>41</sup> This also defined the Emperor's role in legal proceedings initiated by his subjects. He was invoked either to legitimize a particular course of action or to lend his political and military weight to a party's proceedings. In 1186–88, for instance, Count Baldwin of Hainault sought Frederick's backing in pursuit of his claim to the inheritance of Namur. He approached the Emperor firstly because part of the county (and some of his own lands) were held in fief from the empire, but also to counter the formidable alliance of those opposing his claims, who, at one point, included the Count of Champagne and the King of France.<sup>42</sup> Baldwin was driven by a need to have legal authorization for his claims, but he also required the political support which would allow him to pursue them. A similar emphasis emerges from a number of reports on the fall of Henry the Lion. Among those hostile to Henry, prominence was given to the claim that Frederick had acted not out of his own volition, but only after the Saxon nobles had felt unable to receive justice from

<sup>38</sup> Otto of Freising, *Gesta Frederici*, Bk II, ch. 48, pp. 378–79.

<sup>39</sup> Otto was not the only observer to rank this as the Emperor's most outstanding achievement or duty: *Otonis de Sancto Blasio Chronica*, ed. by A. Hofmeister, MGH *Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum* sep. ed., 47 (Hannover: Hahn, 1912), ch. 31, p. 44; *Burchardi Chronicon*, p. 22; *Chronica S. Petri Erfordensis*, p. 185.

<sup>40</sup> *Annales Marbacenses*, p. 50.

<sup>41</sup> *Annales Aquenses*, ed. by G. H. Pertz, MGH *Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum*, 16 (Hannover: Hahn, 1859), p. 686.

<sup>42</sup> *Chronique de Gislebert*, pp. 161–62, 195–99, 201–03, 207–09.

Henry.<sup>43</sup> That is, Frederick was called upon to bring to justice a disturber of the peace, as a last resort (after all other avenues had been exhausted) and as the only one of sufficient might to curb the Duke's activities. To some extent, this was an extreme case, but it conforms to a general pattern. Frederick was approached only after all other means had been exhausted and in order to convey legitimacy onto the actions of those who had invoked his aid.<sup>44</sup>

There was a clear expectation that, ultimately, conflicts had to be resolved locally. For every case where Frederick settled feuds and conflicts, where he was called upon to intervene in dynastic or ecclesiastical rivalries, there were several like the feud between Duke Welf and Count Palatine Hugo of Tübingen in 1163–64, which had started when Hugo captured a group of *ministeriales* engaged in robbery. Two of the men belonged to his own household and were set free, while the third, from the *familia* of Duke Welf, was hanged. Matters were complicated by the fact that Hugo was said to have held some of his lands from Welf. He thus executed his own lord's men.<sup>45</sup> The conflict escalated when the Duke's son returned from Italy and took to ravaging the Count's lands. Hugo, in turn, approached the Duke of Swabia and the King of Bohemia for support.<sup>46</sup> When Welf the younger attacked Tübingen, his army was routed, and many of his supporters taken captive.<sup>47</sup> Welf senior arranged a truce for one year, at the end of which the conflict erupted again. It was at this stage that the Emperor got involved and called a diet

<sup>43</sup> *Chronica S. Petri Erfordensis*, pp. 188–89; *Annales S. Petri Maiores*, in *Monumenta Erpbesfurtensia*, pp. 62–64; *Chronica regia Coloniensis (Annales maximi Colonienses) cum continuationibus in monasterio S. Pantaleonis scriptis aliisque historiae Coloniensis monumentis*, ed. by Georg Waitz, MGH Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum, 18 (Hannover: Hahn, 1880), *Continuatio* I, p. 130.

<sup>44</sup> Sometimes this could take the form of a final, spiteful thwarting of one's opponents as when, in 1171, Bishop Theodore of Metz settled his conflict with the monks of St Trond by selling his claims to the Emperor, or when Welf VI, unable to receive the funds he wanted from Henry the Lion, simply sold the claim to his inheritance to Frederick II. *Gestorum Abbatum Trudonensium Continuatio Secunda*, ed. by R. Köpke, MGH Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum, 10 (Hannover: Hahn, 1852), pp. 355–56; *Ottonis de Sancto Blasio*, ch. 21, pp. 28–29. For the wider background, see Karl Leyser, 'Frederick Barbarossa and the Hohenstaufen Polity', *Viator*, 19 (1988), 153–76; repr. in his *Communications and Power in Medieval Europe*, ed. by Timothy Reuter (London: Hambledon, 1995), pp. 115–42.

<sup>45</sup> *Historia Welforum*, ch. 30, pp. 60–61, Bernd Schneidmüller, *Die Welfen: Herrschaft und Erinnerung (819–1252)* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 2000), pp. 98–99.

<sup>46</sup> *Ottonis de Sancto Blasio*, ch. 18, p. 20; *Historia Welforum*, ch. 31, pp. 66–67.

<sup>47</sup> *Historia Welforum*, ch. 30, pp. 62–65; *Annales Engelbergenses*, ed. by G. Waitz, MGH Scriptores, 17 (Hannover: Hahn, 1861), p. 279; *Ottonis de Sancto Blasio*, ch. 18, p. 21.

to Ulm in Swabia in the spring of 1164.<sup>48</sup> In a festive assembly attended by Henry the Lion, Welf's nephew, the Duke himself, the Duke of Zähringen, and many of the great men of the realm, the conflict was discussed, and Hugo was found to be its instigator. Frederick did not, however, personally do justice. Rather, after taking the advice of the princes, he called upon Hugo either to abjure the realm or to compensate Welf senior for the damages he had suffered. It was left to Welf to enforce the decision. Hugo, seeing that he could not count on the Emperor's backing, performed the ritual of *deditio* and submitted to Welf, but was imprisoned by the Duke.<sup>49</sup> That is, unlike in some of the earlier examples we have dealt with, Frederick did not intervene to settle a conflict as such — he merely safeguarded the peace by limiting and legitimizing violence.

So far, a number of differences have emerged. As far as the chroniclers were concerned, Henry II remained the sole source of justice; his main duty was to ensure that criminals were brought to heel, and the best means of achieving this was by appointing suitable officials and by supervising them carefully. In the empire, by contrast, royal justice certainly included the punishment of evildoers, but it was a function shared with princes and prelates, and the ruler's ability to settle feuds was deemed more important. These differences are neatly encapsulated in Henry's and Frederick's 'legislative' endeavours. When Henry II reformed the governance of the realm in 1178–79, the emphasis was on the selection of suitable officials, while in 1186 Frederick issued a *Landfrieden*, or peace mandate, which sought to regulate the conduct of feuds.<sup>50</sup> The picture painted so far is thus a familiar one: English kingship defined itself by means of controlling the administrative apparatus at the monarch's disposal, while imperial lordship was a more informal matter of negotiating complex rivalries by means of symbolic communication. At the same time, we find these differences in a perhaps unexpected context: in the *definition* of justice. Despite referring to common principles (a king ought to do justice), what these principles

<sup>48</sup> *Historia Welforum*, ch. 31, pp. 66–67; *Ottonis de Sancto Blasio*, ch. 19, p. 21.

<sup>49</sup> *Historia Welforum*, ch. 31, pp. 66–67; *Ottonis de Sancto Blasio*, ch. 19, p. 21.

<sup>50</sup> *Burchardi Chronicon*, p. 65. Attention should also be drawn to the phenomenology developed by Timothy Reuter for the eleventh century, many elements of which are, however, still applicable to the twelfth: 'Unruhestiftung, Fehde, Rebellion, Widerstand: Gewalt und Frieden in der Politik der Salierzeit', in *Die Salier und das Reich: Gesellschaftlicher und Ideengeschichtlicher Wandel im Reich der Salier*, ed. by Stefan Weinfurter, 3 vols (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1992), III, 297–325 (English version, *Medieval Politics*, ed. by Nelson, Chapter 19). See also Gerd Althoff, 'Königsherrschaft und Konfliktbewältigung im 10. und 11. Jahrhundert', in his *Spielregeln der Politik im Mittelalter: Kommunikation in Frieden und Fehde* (Darmstadt: Primus Verlag, 1997), pp. 21–56.

meant in practice differed widely. The next step to take is therefore to ask whether these differences in defining royal justice were also reflected in the way its exercise was described. Three broad overlapping themes have to be discussed in answering this question: the public nature of justice, the personnel involved in administering it, and the importance attached to status, location, and due legal process.

### *The Means and Mechanisms of Justice*

In Germany, doing justice was a collaborative undertaking. The emperor may have presided over the proceedings, but he acted in close cooperation with the princes. In 1187, for instance, when Baldwin of Hainault found his claim to Namur frustrated once again, Gislebert de Mons mentioned the support the Count had received from the Emperor, but he also emphasized that the princes had advised Frederick to support Baldwin.<sup>51</sup> Similarly, in reports of Henry the Lion's demise, there is a marked difference between those accounts supportive of Frederick, which stressed that the Emperor had acted in cooperation with the princes and at their behest,<sup>52</sup> and those hostile to him, which claimed that he had tricked them into action.<sup>53</sup> This suggests that the Emperor was expected to follow the lead of the princes, and that it was a sign of tyranny if he reversed that order of action.<sup>54</sup> Even more remarkably, the German princes were consulted concerning affairs germane to the empire as a whole. Thus, in 1158, during the diet of Roncaglia, a key event in defining and stating the extent of Barbarossa's claims to authority over the Italian communes, the counsel taken by Frederick was not that of the towns or nobles of Lombardy, but of the German princes.<sup>55</sup> Imperial judgements, in short, derived their legitimacy from being reached in close consultation with the princes and prelates of the empire.

A number of important features originate in the public nature of royal justice, and from the degree to which the ruler was bound by the advice and counsel of his princes. Most importantly, the composition of the audience mattered, as it was the

<sup>51</sup> *Chronique de Gislebert*, pp. 201–02.

<sup>52</sup> *Chronica S. Petri Erfordensis*, pp. 188–89; *Annales S. Petri Maiores*, pp. 62–64; *Chronica Regia Coloniensis, Continuatio I*, p. 130.

<sup>53</sup> *Arnoldi Chronica Slavorum*, ed. by Johann Martin Lappenberg, MGH *Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum* sep. ed., 14 (Hannover: Hahn, 1868), pp. 38–39.

<sup>54</sup> This should not, however, be read as a firm and iron rule. See, for instance, Otto of Freising, *Gesta Frederici*, Bk II, chs 48 and 57, pp. 376–79, 388–91.

<sup>55</sup> *Burchardi Chronicon*, p. 31.

audience which ultimately determined the outcome of a hearing. Count Hugo had found out as much when the diet of Ulm was attended not by Hugo's partisans, but by those of Welf. Facing an array of such powerful enemies left Hugo little chance of success. Similarly, when, in 1152, the Bishop of Cambrai and the Count of Flanders went before the Emperor, they sought not only to ensure that they had powerful supporters pleading their case, but also to influence the composition of the audience,<sup>56</sup> while Henry the Lion's supporters had initially argued that the case against the Duke should be heard in his native province of Swabia,<sup>57</sup> where, we may assume, a more favourably disposed public could have been secured. There was thus a reason why, when Barbarossa sought to resolve the dispute between Henry the Lion and Henry Jasomirgott over the possession of Bavaria in 1156, Henry Jasomirgott did not at first attend the diet at Regensburg, the old ducal capital of Bavaria, where support for the Welfs was particularly strong. Instead, he set up camp two miles outside and did not attend the meeting until after the princes had publicly confirmed Frederick's proposed settlement.<sup>58</sup> Henry had to make sure that the settlement suggested by Frederick found the support of a potentially hostile audience.

The public nature of justice served a number of purposes: it demonstrated the ruler's ability to fulfil his functions; it symbolized the alliance of monarch and princes; and it ensured not only that a decision became widely known, but also that those who had taken part in reaching it felt obliged to uphold it.<sup>59</sup> This latter point in particular is illustrated by an episode in the struggle over Namur. In July 1187, Henry of Champagne, who had recently been installed as the Count's heir, came to Namur to attend a wedding. The Count seized the opportunity afforded by the

<sup>56</sup> *Lamberti Waterlos Annales Cameracenses*, ed. by G. H. Pertz, MGH *Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum*, 16 (Hannover: Hahn, 1859), p. 524.

<sup>57</sup> *Burchardi Chronicon*, pp. 54–55. See also Thomas Zotz, 'Heinrich der Löwe und die Welfen in Schwaben', in *Heinrich der Löwe und seine Zeit: Herrschaft und Repräsentation der Welfen 1125–1235. Katalog der Ausstellung, Braunschweig 1995*, ed. by Jochen Luckhardt and Franz Niehoff, 3 vols (Munich: Hirmer, 1995), II, 69–77; Zotz, 'Heinrich der Löwe und Schwaben: Nähe und Distanz in persönlicher und räumlicher Sicht', in *Heinrich der Löwe: Herrschaft und Repräsentation*, ed. by Johannes Fried and Otto Gerhard Oexle (Ostfildern: Thorbecke, 2003), pp. 311–45.

<sup>58</sup> Otto of Freising, *Gesta Frederici*, Bk II, ch. 57, pp. 388–91.

<sup>59</sup> Bernhard Thum, 'Öffentlichkeit und Kommunikation im Mittelalter: Zur Herstellung von Öffentlichkeit im Bezugsfeld elementarer Kommunikationsformen im 13. Jahrhundert', in *Höfische Repräsentation: Das Zeremoniell und die Zeichen*, ed. by Hedda Ragotzky and Hans Wenzel (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1990), pp. 65–87; Timothy Reuter, 'Assembly Politics in Western Europe From the Eighth Century to the Twelfth', in *The Medieval World*, ed. by Peter Linehan and Janet L. Nelson (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 433–50.

festivities to extract an oath from his subjects that they, too, would accept Henry as his heir.<sup>60</sup> By being called upon to witness a decision, the men of Namur were also called upon to enforce and defend it. This was especially important in a polity like the high medieval empire, which lacked officials who would have enforced a diet's judgement. Ultimately, it was left to the claimant to ensure that a decision was put into practice — as we have seen in the case of Welf and Count Hugo. The stronger the support a litigant could muster, the greater were his chances not only of securing a favourable judgement, but also of turning that judgement into political reality.

Bishop Nicholas of Cambrai was to find this out in 1152, when he brought a case against the Count of Flanders. Neither Count nor Bishop argued their case in person. Rather, the Count's arguments were summarized by the Duke of Lorraine, and the prelate's by the Archbishop of Trier. That is, they called on intercessors who had the power and influence which they themselves lacked. However, the diet split almost evenly between the prelates, who sided with the Bishop, and the secular lords, who backed the Count. More importantly, the Bishop of Cambrai felt that there would be little point in pressing his case, unless he first received a safe conduct from the Count on returning to his diocese.<sup>61</sup> Justice was public and consultative, but the Emperor's role was that of someone who sought to forge a consensus, rather than forcing it upon his subjects. If, as in 1152, such a consensus could not be reached, the Emperor had only limited room for manoeuvre. In the end, all that Frederick could do was to force the Count to grant a safe-conduct, and hence postpone a decision on the dispute.<sup>62</sup>

English sources, too, emphasize the public nature of royal justice. In 1157, the Abbot of Battle and the Bishop of Chichester sought a settlement of the Bishop's claim, bitterly contested by the monks, to undertake visitations of the abbey.<sup>63</sup> When Henry celebrated Pentecost at Bury St Edmunds — a truly festive occasion that included a public wearing of the royal crown and which drew a large and

<sup>60</sup> *Chronique de Gislebert*, pp. 197–98. This was not uncommon. See, for Henry II, Gervase of Canterbury, *Chronica*, p. 297, and for Henry I, William of Malmesbury, *Historia Novella*, ed. and trans. by Edmund King and K. R. Potter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), Bk I, chs 2 and 8, pp. 6–9, 18–21.

<sup>61</sup> *Lamberti Annales*, pp. 524–25.

<sup>62</sup> *Lamberti Annales*, p. 526.

<sup>63</sup> *The Chronicle of Battle Abbey*, ed. and trans. by Eleanor Searle (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), pp. 174–89. This account should, however, be read in conjunction with Nicholas Vincent, 'King Henry II and the Monks of Battle: The Battle Chronicle Unmasked', in *Belief and Culture in the Middle Ages: Studies Presented to Henry Mayr-Harting*, ed. by Richard Gameson and Henrietta Leyser (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 264–86, especially at pp. 277–85.

illustrious crowd — Abbot and Bishop were assigned a day on which their dispute would be decided. Although the hearing was initially for a select group of participants only — it took place in the chapter house, and the King commanded that nobody enter it unless he ordered them to do so — there is nonetheless some evidence for its public nature.<sup>64</sup> The matter was thus treated during festivities which ensured a sizeable audience, and in close consultation between the King, his court, and his nobles. In fact, at least as far as the Battle version of events was concerned, Thomas Becket, the royal chancellor, and the assembled audience took the lead, with the King relegated to a role not unlike that of the Emperor. This only changed later in the proceedings, when the Bishop of Chichester was said to have insulted the King's honour.<sup>65</sup> In this respect, at least, Henry appears to have worked under constraints similar to those facing Barbarossa: a judgement was passed only after extensive private and public consultation.<sup>66</sup>

We should, however, notice the personnel involved at Bury: the only participants identified by name were Thomas Becket, the chancellor, and Richard de Lucy, the justiciar. That is, the lead in this investigation was taken by royal officials, not the King or his noble subjects. This illustrates an important difference compared with the German sources (where, as we have seen, the initiative normally rested with the princes), but also ties in with earlier comments about the need to control royal officials. In *De Nugis*, Walter presented a careful contrast between Henry I and Henry II: while the former 'would have no man [...] feel the want of justice or of peace' and therefore 'arranged that on vacation days he would allow access to his presence [...]; at that time he would have with him the earls, barons, and noble vavassors',<sup>67</sup> the latter, 'when he makes a stay anywhere (away from home), [...] does not allow himself to be seen as honest men would have him to, but shuts himself up within, and is only accessible to those who seem unworthy of such ready

<sup>64</sup> *Chronicle of Battle Abbey*, pp. 178–81, 184–85.

<sup>65</sup> *Chronicle of Battle Abbey*, pp. 186–87. That this was a matter of ecclesiastical, rather than secular, law seems not to have been unusual: *Chronica Jocelini de Brakelonda: The Chronicle of Jocelin de Brakelond*, ed. and trans. by H. E. Butler (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1949), pp. 20–23; Gervase of Canterbury, *Historical Works*, I, 309–24. Both instances follow a pattern similar to that in 1157. For an intriguing parallel from Germany, too complex to be explored here, see *Gesta Treverorum archiepiscoporum*, *Continuatio*, III, 383–85.

<sup>66</sup> As Tim Reuter had outlined in '*Velle sibi fieri*'; see also Anne Duggan, *Thomas Becket* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), *passim*, for further examples, and Nicholas Vincent, 'The Court of Henry II', in *Henry II: New Perspectives*, ed. by Christopher Harper-Bill (forthcoming).

<sup>67</sup> Map, *De nugis curialium*, Distichon 5, c. 6, pp. 470–71.

access'.<sup>68</sup> The distinction drawn by Map was that between an ideal (and highly idealized) ruler, who sought to perform his functions as judge conscientiously, and one who viewed them as a cumbersome burden. Equally worth noting, however, is the identity of those whose advice was sought by the king: while Henry I listened to his noble vassals, his grandson relied on officials and courtiers. Not without reason, therefore, is Map's account of Henry II immediately followed by a list of the evils which unsupervised officials wreak upon a ruler's subjects: most importantly, while they 'make [the king] play, they [...] seat themselves on the bench and decide just and unjust causes, all to the same end'.<sup>69</sup> Royal officials certainly mattered, but at best they deflected and at worst they prevented the king from doing his duty.

It was partly because receiving justice depended so much on easy access to those who had the power to give it, that the humble king, approachable to everyone, was such a stable feature of medieval historical writing.<sup>70</sup> In our period, this was, however, a theme elaborated more frequently in English than in German sources. Even in hagiographical writings, the ability to secure access to the monarch, if necessary against his will, was the mark of a true saint.<sup>71</sup> All this echoes Map's complaints about Henry II, but it also underlines, first, that in England doing justice was still perceived to be the monarch's personal duty, and, second, as Map's portrayal of Henry I had shown, that it was best performed in consultation with his leading noble subjects, not his officials. Moreover, this point was not just made by those critical of the King. In the 1150s, for instance, the monks of Abingdon sought to reclaim a manor seized by one of their neighbours, a certain Thurstan. Successive attempts at having the case resolved failed, and the brethren thus approached Henry II yet again. The King passed the matter to his judges, who soon recognized that the abbey had been wronged, but did not dare take the matter further until they had heard the King himself pronounce judgement ('nisi prius audita ab ore

<sup>68</sup> Map, *De nugis curialium*, Distichon 5, c. 6, pp. 484–85.

<sup>69</sup> Map, *De nugis curialium*, Distichon 5, c. 7, pp. 510–13. See also the similar points made, early in the thirteenth century, by Gerald of Wales, *De principis instructione liber*, ed. by George F. Warner, in *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, vol. VIII, *Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevii Scriptores* (London: Longman, Green, 1891), pp. 9–12.

<sup>70</sup> Björn Weiler, 'The *rex renitens* and the Medieval Ideal of Kingship, c. 950 – c. 1250', *Viator*, 31 (2000), 1–42; Althoff, 'Verwandtschaft, Freundschaft, Klientel: Der schwierige Weg zum Ohr des Herrschers', in his *Spielregeln der Politik im Mittelalter*, pp. 185–98, for some intriguing parallels with the later English case.

<sup>71</sup> *Magna vita Sancti Hugonis*, ed. and trans. by Decima L. Douie and David Hugh Farmer, 2 vols (London: Nelson, 1961 and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), Bk III, ch. x (1, 114–18).

regis sententia').<sup>72</sup> As at Bury in 1157, therefore, the investigation was led by Henry's officials, and on his behalf, but the final decision rested with the King alone.<sup>73</sup> This points to a subtle but important difference in the role of the audience: Frederick derived his authority as judge from the consensus of those in whose presence or at whose request he acted. In England, the reverse was the case. This also meant that, while recognizing the importance of the king's officials, chroniclers did not necessarily endorse it. Rather, they responded with an even greater emphasis on the ruler's personal responsibility for doing justice.

This remains, however, only part of a more complex picture. The royal administration of justice in England shared a number of features with that of the Emperor in Germany. In England, too, a trial's location could determine its outcome. Jocelin de Brakelond describes a dispute between Abbot Samson of Bury St Edmunds and Archbishop Baldwin of Canterbury. When, in 1187, the King's court, in Henry II's presence, decreed that the issue should be decided by local juries in Norfolk and Suffolk, the Archbishop intervened, claiming that, as the two counties 'held great love' for St Edmund, and as many of the men there were dependants of the Abbot, Baldwin would not receive a fair hearing. That his fears were not unfounded is suggested by Jocelin, who gleefully follows this with an anecdote about some of the Archbishop's men who had been assaulted by those of Bury, but did not dare to bring the case to court before the Abbot, in whose jurisdiction the attack had occurred.<sup>74</sup> This also suggests that, just as in the German case, the rank and power of one's supporters mattered: after all, those who had attacked the Archbishop's men were likely to go unpunished, due to the protection they could expect from their lord. Such backing became even more important once a dispute moved from the localities to the royal court. This is illustrated by the Battle vs Chichester case: unlike the Bishop's, the monks' case was argued not by one of their own, but by

<sup>72</sup> *Historia ecclesie Abbenonensis*, pp. 241–43. See also similar cases collected in *English Lawsuits from William I to Richard I*, ed. by R. C. van Caenegem, 2 vols, Selden Society Publications, 107 (London: Selden Society, 1990–91), nos 406, 489 (II, 382–84, 533–34).

<sup>73</sup> Similar cases are reported, for instance, by the Walden Abbey chronicler, or the *Gesta Abbatum* of St Albans. *The Book of the Foundation of Walden Monastery*, ed. and trans. by Diana Greenway and Leslie Watkiss (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), Bk I, 12, pp. 24–27; *English Lawsuits*, no. 396 (II, 354–58). To some extent we are, of course, not comparing like with like: while the examples from England were concerned with the authenticity and interpretation of royal charters, this was not the case in Germany. At the same time, this reflects the preoccupations of our sources, which, in the German case, tended not to report cases hinging on royal charters.

<sup>74</sup> Jocelin, *Chronica*, pp. 50–52.

Richard de Lucy, Henry's chief justiciar. To some extent, this was part of a narrative strategy which juxtaposed the legitimacy of Battle's claims with the presumption of the Bishop, who could not find anyone to side with him. It was not an isolated incident. In the 1170s, a conflict between the monks of St Albans and Robert de Valognes, one of their neighbours, over a stretch of wood near Northaw, involved both one of the King's chief confidantes, Earl Robert of Leicester (who acted for his namesake), and the Queen, who sided with the monks.<sup>75</sup> The degree to which ensuring the support of powerful allies was part and parcel of the everyday practice of English law under Henry II may also be illustrated by the regular payment of 100 shillings which Abbot Ingulph of Abingdon had made to the sheriff of Berkshire, so as to ensure favourable treatment in the sheriff's court. More importantly, his successor objected not to the arrangement as such, but to attempts by the sheriff to turn what had been a voluntary payment into a customary one.<sup>76</sup>

All this leads to our final point to consider: the kind of judgement chroniclers deemed ideal. To some extent, this matter is easily settled. To monastic historians in particular, what mattered were those cases which gave them an undisputable claim. Cases which had been left undecided, by contrast, were hardly recorded, while there was also a tendency to turn a by no means decisive victory into a triumphant assertion of a community's rights. When the monks of Abingdon, for instance, finally saw their claim to Thurstan's manor vindicated, the royal judgement had in fact been couched in terms of a compromise: Thurstan would pay damages to the abbey, but in return would hold the disputed manor in fief. However, the damages decreed by the King were so high that Thurstan was unable to afford them. In the eyes of the Abingdon chronicler, this had clearly been the King's desired outcome from the start.<sup>77</sup> Whether this had really been the case is impossible to ascertain. It may be telling, however, that, in 1157, the Battle Abbey chronicler described the Bishop of Chichester's suggestion that the conflict be settled by compromise in terms that suggest it was a token of weakness, rather than strength: having been unable to recruit powerful supporters, and having been mocked by both Becket and the King, the prelate thus sought to rescue what he could of his claims.

<sup>75</sup> *English Lawsuits*, no. 396 (II, 354–58).

<sup>76</sup> *Historia ecclesie Abbendonensis*, pp. 314–15. Note also the very similar role of money payments in exchange for justice in the case of Frederick Barbarossa: Knut Görich, *Die Ehre Friedrich Barbarossas: Kommunikation und politisches Handeln im 12. Jahrhundert* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2001), pp. 331–63; Hermann Kamp, 'Geld und Moral im hohen Mittelalter', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 35 (2001), 329–47.

<sup>77</sup> *Historia ecclesie Abbendonensis*, pp. 242–43.

These examples may alert us to the dangers which pressing one's case too far could pose, and it might explain why, ultimately, neither the monks of Bury nor the Archbishop of Canterbury pursued their conflict beyond the initial hearing at Henry's court. Equally, Henry's solution for the Northaw dispute, as reported by the St Albans chronicler, may be read as indicating a preference for couching legal judgements in the form of mutually acceptable compromises. The evidence is too thin to deduce a general trend, but it allows a tantalizing glimpse of a world in which legal decisions may not normally have been as straightforward as our sources suggest.

The German case is equally complex. At first sight, though, compromise seems to have been a common way of resolving disputes. Similarly, those who submitted to their opponents appear to have expected that the latter would desist from pressing their advantage to the full. This may have been one of the reasons why Count Hugo of Tübingen was prepared to give himself over to Duke Welf. It also explains the predicament that had faced the Emperor when confronted with the clash between the Bishop of Cambrai and the Count of Flanders: reaching a mutually acceptable settlement was no longer possible. At the same time, these examples should also warn us against assuming that compromise was inevitably the outcome of imperial justice. Other factors, too, played their part: the power and influence of those who aided the litigants, a party's ability to enforce a judgement, or the degree to which Frederick felt he could set aside, or make greater gains by setting aside, expectations of an amicable settlement.<sup>78</sup> Count Hugo, after all, remained a prisoner for the remainder of his captor's lifetime; the *ministerialis* who, in 1152, had thrown himself at Frederick's feet was driven from court; and when Henry the Lion finally submitted to the Emperor, he was deprived of his fiefs and forced into exile. This may, as Gerd Althoff has suggested,<sup>79</sup> imply changing concepts of justice, with a stronger emphasis on stern punishment, rather than mildness and forgiveness, but, and perhaps more importantly, it also points to the complex web of forces which ultimately defined the practice of royal justice.

This is not to say that norms and procedures did not matter.<sup>80</sup> Gislebert de Mons, in charting Count Baldwin's quest for his inheritance, took great care to note how meticulously his hero followed established legal precedent and contrasted this favourably with the blatant disregard for legal norms shown by his opponents. Equally, the conflict between the Archbishop of Canterbury and the monks of

<sup>78</sup> Görich, *Die Ehre*, pp. 303–30.

<sup>79</sup> Althoff, *Macht der Rituale*.

<sup>80</sup> See also on the period pre-1166, John G. H. Hudson, 'Court Cases and Legal Arguments in England, c. 1066–1166', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th series, 10 (2004), 91–116.

Bury was fought by extensive reference to legal procedure. Legal norms were, however, subject to modification and interpretation, as Henry the Lion's partisans found when they argued that a duke could not be deprived of his lands, unless the plea had been brought against him in his duchy.<sup>81</sup> They existed, moreover, in relation to a complex web not only of conflicting forces and customs, but also of concepts and ideals. Legal decisions were dependant not merely on where they were made, or who supported the litigants or what established precedent decreed, but also on the status and the honour of those involved — including that of the monarch.<sup>82</sup> More importantly, that this was as common in Angevin England as in Staufen Germany should alert us to the degree to which the parameters outlined at the beginning of this essay have shifted.

### *Royal Justice and the Nature of Historical Narrative*

There were many and important differences in the ways contemporary observers represented the exercise of royal or imperial justice. These differences are, however, not necessarily to be found where we would expect them. Both English and German chroniclers emphasized the importance of extralegal mechanisms for the settlement of disputes — the need to find powerful intercessors and to ensure that a case was treated in a venue which would not negatively prejudice its outcome. They also shared an emphasis on the public and consultative nature of justice and stressed its importance as an expression of successful lordship. However, they situated these mechanisms within very different frameworks. Not only were there no rival secular jurisdictions in England, but the King's duties extended to areas which, in Germany, were primarily the responsibility of the princes — in particular, the pursuit of evildoers and petty criminals — or for which no equivalent existed, such as the overseeing of royal officials. Frederick Barbarossa, on the other hand, was to be mainly concerned with a type of dispute that was rarely discussed in narrative sources from England: the resolution of noble feuds. This also had repercussions for the monarch's role in doing justice. While Frederick was normally expected to act at the behest of and in consultation with his aristocratic subjects, and while imperial judgements legitimized and voiced the consensus of those consulted, English chroniclers assigned a much more active role to Henry II. Thus, distinctions have

<sup>81</sup> *Burchardi Chronicon*, pp. 54–55; *Arnoldi Chronica Slavorum*, p. 49.

<sup>82</sup> See, for Germany, *Otonis de Sancto Blasio*, pp. 33–34; *Arnoldi Chronica Slavorum*, p. 38. For England, *Chronicle of Battle Abbey*, pp. 186–87; Gervase of Canterbury, *Historical Works*, I, 313.

to be drawn chiefly with regard to the concept of royal justice, and not the means by which it was brought about: German and English chroniclers expected their rulers to do different things, but they agreed, within different frameworks of legal organization, on the mechanisms by which that was to be done.

Much of this deviates noticeably from what we know of the reality of royal and imperial justice. Frederick Barbarossa was well capable of initiating legal proceedings on his own, of setting aside and ignoring the advice and counsel of his princes;<sup>83</sup> he may not have had access to a trained corps of professional lawyers and *judices*, but he could draw on the services of ministerial families, such as the Bolanden, Justingen, and others, who performed functions often not very different from those of royal officials in England.<sup>84</sup> That is, the extent of Frederick's powers and the means at his disposal were more wide-ranging and varied than the image painted by contemporary chroniclers might lead us to expect. Similarly, royal justice in England was highly fragmented. Most modern historians would agree, for instance, that the royal court developed its dominant juridical role gradually, and only in the second half of Henry's reign.<sup>85</sup> There is, furthermore, clear evidence that criminal cases, too, continued to be dealt with by lords other than the King, and that they did so well into the thirteenth century. Equally, royal authority was not all pervasive: it was far more limited, not only in the marcher lordships of Shropshire or Herefordshire, but also in the earldoms of Devon and Cornwall, or in the palatinate of Durham. Finally, there were feuds in England, too, as Paul Hyams has so persuasively argued, and, just like his imperial counterpart, Henry II, too, was engaged in settling noble feuds.<sup>86</sup> In short, the image of centralized royal control as it emerges from the narrative sources did not reflect the reality of English royal justice.

The degree to which this representation of royal justice differed from its reality is remarkable and worth noticing in its own right. In the English case, the response of most annalists to the administrative innovations of Henry II's reign was to juxtapose the reality of royal justice with an ideal that emphasized the ruler's personal

<sup>83</sup> Leyser, 'Frederick Barbarossa'; Otto of Freising, *Gesta Frederici*, Bk II, chs 48, 57, pp. 376–79, 388–91.

<sup>84</sup> Erwin Jacob, 'Untersuchungen über Herkunft und Aufstieg des Reichsministerialengeschlechtes Bolanden' (unpublished PhD dissertation, Giessen, 1936); Benjamin Arnold, *German Knighthood, 1050–1300* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985).

<sup>85</sup> See, for instance, Kevin L. Shirley, *The Secular Jurisdiction of Monasteries in Anglo-Norman and Angevin England* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2004); White, *Restoration and Reform*; Amt, *Accession*; Huscroft, *Ruling England*.

<sup>86</sup> Paul R. Hyams, *Rancor and Reconciliation in Medieval England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003).

role in and responsibility for the doing of justice. Sometimes, as in the case of Walter Map, this was done with considerable vitriol, but chroniclers in general preferred a more subtle highlighting of those aspects which they deemed to comply with their understanding of what royal justice was meant to accomplish and how it was meant to be done. Similarly, that Frederick Barbarossa was perhaps the most interventionist emperor to rule for at least a generation barely registered in the German sources. Instead, with the important exception of Otto of Freising and Rahewin, contemporaries formulated an ideal of royal justice that, at least as far as conditions in Germany were concerned, was firmly rooted in the political practice of the preceding reigns. Chroniclers did not, however, simply ignore or set aside contemporary realities. The emphasis on the settlement of feuds and noble conflicts in Germany, for instance, reflected both the fact that this had been one of the key challenges to the lordship of Frederick's predecessors and the degree to which Barbarossa excelled at performing this particular task. The emphasis in English sources on royal officials and the need to control them properly points in a similar direction. This should also alert us to yet another level of enquiry. Both German and English chroniclers constructed an ideal of royal justice, but one that was firmly rooted in specific cultural and political traditions. A question which still needs answering, however, is to what extent that cultural and political framework may have influenced both what was recorded and how it was recorded. Just as we have seen that royal justice could mean something very different to English and German observers, so the criteria according to which they selected the materials they recorded, too, were at times quite different. We will not be able to appreciate fully what distinguished English royal from imperial lordship, however, or what they had in common, unless we outline at least some of the parameters within which the principles of monarchical power were defined and their exercise written about.

English chroniclers attribute a greater degree of power to their King than their German counterparts grant the Emperor. This certainly reflected the fact that Henry II had means of interfering more directly and forcefully in the way his subjects conducted their affairs. It was also linked to different traditions of historical writing. The degree to which English historical writing in the twelfth century focussed on the actions of the King and the royal court is worth pointing out: Roger of Hoveden, William of Newburgh, Ralph of Diss, and others view English history through the prism of the King's actions and activities. This does not mean that they were sponsored by the court, or that they took a royalist stance, but that they wrote the history of high politics as and when it touched upon the King's actions. The picture of Henry's rule that emerges is at times oddly anaemic: with few exceptions (most notably the King's penance for the murder of Becket, Henry

the Young King's revolt, or the pilgrimage of 1174), little detail is given beyond the bare outline of facts. We are told, for instance, that the King visited England, but by what route, whom he met, under what circumstances, the issues he dealt with, and how they were treated are rarely elaborated upon. There is, furthermore, little that can be gleaned from these grand narratives about conditions in the localities or the motivations of the great magnates. Equally, monastic chronicles, like those produced at Battle, Abingdon, Waltham, or (to a lesser extent) Bury St Edmunds were largely concerned with property disputes and regional developments directly relevant to the wealth and standing of their writer's community, rather than the doings of their noble patrons.

In Germany, by contrast, few narratives survive which concerned themselves primarily with the ruler's actions. Even those that do so viewed his undertakings through the lens of local or regional concerns.<sup>87</sup> By and large, the Emperor's actions were recorded once they had an immediate impact on a writer's region or institution — when he visited, for instance, or when he called upon the lords of the land to aid him in his campaigns — or if he was involved in events significant for the empire at large (his coronation as Emperor, for instance, his Italian campaigns, or the struggle with Henry the Lion). It was Frederick's duty to pacify the empire and the Church. German affairs certainly mattered, but Frederick's function was limited to settling the internal rivalries of the German princes and to overseeing the legitimate exercise of power — duties, in a way, not very different from those he faced, for instance, in Denmark or Hungary.<sup>88</sup> Moreover, we have access to a type of historical writing

<sup>87</sup> See, for instance, *Burchardi Chronicon*, p. 26.

<sup>88</sup> *Otonis de Sancto Blasio*, pp. 40–41; *Chronique de Gislebert*, p. 156; *Chronica regia Coloniensis*, p. 113; Odilo Engels, 'Friedrich Barbarossa und Dänemark', in *Friedrich Barbarossa: Handlungsspielräume und Wirkungsweisen des staufischen Kaisers*, ed. by Alfred Haverkamp (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1992), pp. 353–87. These, in their turn, were not very different from Henry II's involvement in Navarre, for instance, or Castile, i.e. instances of the truly imperial nature of his power. Otto of Freising's and Rahewin's statement that the Emperor's absence led to unrest in Germany should thus not be read as a criticism of Frederick: the weakness revealed was that of the princes, who were unable to perform their functions by themselves. Otto of Freising, *Gesta Frederici*, Bk II, 45, pp. 372–73. This concept of imperial power began to change, most noticeably in the aftermath of the 1197 Double Election (*Continuatio Milocensis*, ed. by W. Wattenbach, MGH Scriptores, 17 (Hannover: Hahn, 1861), p. 709; *Annales Marbacenses*, pp. 70–71; *Otonis de Sancto Blasio*, ch. 45, pp. 71–72), but even as late as the 1230s it could still be invoked, as, for instance, in Frederick II's proceedings against the Duke of Austria in 1235–36: *Urkundenbuch zur Geschichte der Babenberger in Österreich. Vierter Band. Zweiter Halbband. Ergänzende Quellen 1195–1287*, ed. by Oskar Freiherr von Mitis, Heide Dienst, Christian Lackner, and Herta Hageneder (Vienna: Oldenbourg, 1997), no. 1198.

which barely survives from late twelfth-century England: family history. There was no English equivalent to the *Historia Welforum*, for instance, or even of something like Gislebert of Mons's history of the counts of Hainault. There was no history of the earls of Devon or Hereford, while texts like the *Histoire du Maréchal* or the histories produced at Chester voice concerns very different from those of German family histories. Similarly, apart from Gervase of Canterbury's, there seem to be few historical accounts of particular sees and bishoprics during the reign of Henry II. In Germany, furthermore, even texts like the *Deeds of the Archbishops of Trier* did not limit themselves to a record of internal disputes, but recorded events within the empire, although from a staunchly local perspective. Just as much as the image of imperial justice painted by contemporary or near-contemporary observers was decentralized, so, too, was the record of contemporary events.

This may, furthermore, reflect different traditions as to what historians were meant to record. In a way, in England, those who, in the later twelfth century, wrote secular history may have followed the example set by their predecessors and models, such as William of Malmesbury or the authors of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle who, similarly, produced a court-centred narrative of English history. More importantly, while there had been noble individuals who commissioned works of history, the works they commissioned also centred on English (or British) royal history, as exemplified by Earl Robert of Gloucester, whose patronage extended to (or was at least sought by) writers as diverse as Gaimar, Geoffrey of Monmouth, or William of Malmesbury.<sup>89</sup> Robert, as one of Henry I's illegitimate sons, had no need for a dynastic history, but, if we set aside Malmesbury's *Historia Novella*, which was in part a eulogy of the Earl's role during the early years of Stephen's reign, neither did he seek (or attract) the services of a Gislebert de Mons. Much of this may have reflected the arriviste status of many post-conquest noble families — they hardly warranted genealogies like the one which the *Historia Welforum* had constructed for the Welfs, and which traced them back to classical Rome and the Carolingians.<sup>90</sup> This phenomenon will require a more careful examination than is possible in the present context.<sup>91</sup> What, at this stage, matters is that English and

<sup>89</sup> John Gillingham, 'Kingship, Chivalry and Love: Political and Cultural Values in the Earliest History Written in French. Geoffrey Gaymar's *Estoire des Engleis*', in *Anglo-Norman Political Culture*, ed. by Hollister, pp. 33–58.

<sup>90</sup> *Historia Welforum*, pp. 6–9.

<sup>91</sup> In the meantime, see Odilo Engels, 'Friedrich Barbarossa im Urteil seiner Zeitgenossen', in his *Stauferstudien: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Staufer im 12. Jahrhundert*, ed. by Erich Meuthen and Stefan Weinfurter (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1996), pp. 225–45; Tilman Struve, 'Vorstellungen

German chroniclers, in their reporting of royal justice, may have sought to conform to different traditions of historical writing, and to different expectations among their patrons and readers as to what was worth recording and how it was to be reported. Many of the issues so central to German observers would thus not normally have been recorded by their English counterparts, and vice versa. This raises the possibility that stylistic conventions and patterns of patronage may have exacerbated the differences this essay has been seeking to sketch out. It is important to emphasize that this is not to suggest that these differences existed on parchment alone, that there was no reality beyond the text itself — our evidence is sufficiently varied to rule out so simple a reading. Nonetheless, that same evidence also suggests that the distinctions we have been seeking to outline could owe more to the material and cultural context of their recording than we might have expected.

Where, then, does this leave our understanding of twelfth-century politics and political culture? Ultimately, this essay raises more questions than it can pretend to answer. Further work needs to be done, but it ought to be done on a much broader canvas than has been possible here: we will only be able to assess how unusual either the German or the English case was once both are explored within the wider framework of Latin Europe as a whole. Still, it has been possible to show some of the advantages to be gained from a more comparative approach. We can take little for granted. Even the use of a common language — Latin — and of a shared term — justice — can hide very different uses of language and very different interpretations. But we have also seen how contemporaries upheld common structures and mechanisms, despite applying them within highly divergent frameworks of governmental and juridical practice. In the wider context of post-Carolingian Europe, one lesson to be drawn from this investigation might thus be that, rather than trying to set England or Germany against some ill-defined norm of political organization (which so far has not been found to exist outside the Mâconnais), we should explore the rich and varied complexity of medieval Europe, and the multiplicity of interpretations medieval Europeans offered of their shared heritage, ideals, and principles. This might well be the greatest tribute we could pay to the life and thought of Timothy Reuter.

von “König” und “Reich” in der zweiten Hälfte des 12. Jahrhunderts’, in *Stauferreich im Wandel: Ordnungsvorstellungen und Politik in der Zeit Friedrich Barbarossas*, ed. by Stefan Weinfurter (Stuttgart: Jan Thorbecke, 2002), pp. 288–311. Nicholas Vincent, ‘The Strange Case of the Missing Biographies: The Lives of the Plantagenet Kings of England 1154–1272’, in *Writing Medieval Biography: Essays in Honour of Frank Barlow*, ed. by Sarah Hamilton and Julia Crick (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006), Chapter 16.

## THE IDEOLOGY OF THE TENTH-CENTURY ENGLISH BENEDICTINE 'REFORM'

Julia Barrow

We are so used to thinking of the process by which Benedictine monasticism was introduced, or reintroduced, into tenth-century England as a 'reform' movement that we do not normally pause to consider our terminology.<sup>1</sup> But 'reform' is not a term to be used lightly: it has theological associations which can be traced back to St Paul's writings on personal transformation, and it is almost always used favourably, with the suggestion that what is being reformed is wrong and that what is going to replace it is right.<sup>2</sup> So some work needs to be done on unpacking the concept of 'reform' itself, to see if the term could or should be applied to what Æthelwold and his companions were trying to achieve in tenth-century England. Latin *reformare* and *reformatio* do not occur in their writings, nor do Old English equivalents, and the verb *reformare* is not used frequently in a monastic context in medieval Europe until the writings of Ralph

<sup>1</sup> I owe a great debt to the late Tim Reuter for advice generously given on many historical issues, and not least for urging me to look harder at the term 'reform' and to question the appropriateness of its use for the history of the earlier medieval Church. Tim's own interest in the subject was sparked by translating Gerd Tellenbach's *Westliche Kirche vom 10. bis zum frühen 12. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1988), translated as *The Church in Western Europe from the Tenth to the Early Twelfth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), esp. pp. 157–61; soon afterwards he looked at the applicability of 'reform' language to the actions of Boniface: Timothy Reuter, "Kirchenreform" und "Kirchenpolitik" im Zeitalter Karl Martells: Begriffe und Wirklichkeit', in *Karl Martell in seiner Zeit*, ed. by Jörg Jarnut, Ulrich Nonn, and Michael Richter, Beihefte der Francia, 37 (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1994), pp. 35–59 (pp. 35–41).

<sup>2</sup> Gerhart B. Ladner, *The Idea of Reform: Its Impact on Christian Thought and Action in the Age of the Fathers* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959), pp. 41, 53.

Glaber in the early eleventh century.<sup>3</sup> Even Gregory VII used it only rarely, and Innocent III appears to have been the first author to talk of the ‘reform’ of the Church as a whole.<sup>4</sup>

So, is ‘reform’ a useful term for what Æthelwold, Dunstan, and the rest were trying to do? To answer this, it is necessary to begin by sketching some of the background to the monasticizing process in tenth-century England, and then to look at the figurative language used by the ‘reformers’ to see what light it sheds on their ideology. I will concentrate particularly on the refoundation charter for New Minster, Winchester, which was fairly certainly written by Æthelwold, who was the leading polemicist and the author of most of the ‘reform’ material, and whose oeuvre has recently been re-examined and expanded by Mechthild Gretsch.<sup>5</sup>

### *Historical Background*

First of all, however, we need to bear in mind the main practical aims of the Benedictine ‘reform’ movement in the tenth century. Across western Europe it meant establishing communities of Benedictine monks and nuns, sometimes in completely new foundations (Cluny being the most famous example) and more often in churches which had previously been served by clerks. The model for the Benedictine monasticism of the tenth century, a version of Benedict’s Rule with much more elaborate liturgy, had been laid down by Louis the Pious and Benedict of Aniane in the early ninth century but had not been put into effect generally.<sup>6</sup> In

<sup>3</sup> Rodulfus Glaber, *Opera*, ed. and trans. by John France, Neithard Bulst, and Paul Reynolds, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), pp. 252, 268, 270, 272, 296; for comment, see Julia Barrow, ‘The Ideas and Application of Reform’, in *The Cambridge History of Christianity*, vol. III: 600–1100, ed. by Thomas F. X. Noble and Julia M. H. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 345–62, esp. p. 360.

<sup>4</sup> G. B. Ladner, ‘Gregory the Great and Gregory VII: A Comparison of their Concepts of Renewal’, with ‘A Note on the Computer Methods Used’ by D. W. Packard, *Viator*, 4 (1973), 1–31; on Gregory VII, see also Tellenbach, *Church in Western Europe*, p. 160; on Innocent III, see *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, ed. by Giovanni Domenico Mansi, 54 vols in 59, rev. edn (Paris: Hubert Welter, 1901–27; orig. edn, Florence: Antonio Zatta, 1759–98; repr. Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1960–61), XXII, 960.

<sup>5</sup> Mechthild Gretsch, *The Intellectual Foundations of the English Benedictine Reform*, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England, 25 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), *passim*.

<sup>6</sup> Mayke de Jong, ‘Carolingian Monasticism: The Power of Prayer’, in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. II: c. 700–c. 900, ed. by Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge

England, although the Benedictine rule had been influential in the seventh and eighth centuries, especially at Wearmouth/Jarrow, it had not excluded other monastic customs, and although some ninth-century churchmen in England were well informed about the ecclesiastical changes put into place by Charlemagne and Louis the Pious, there was no attempt to adopt their ideas about imposing the Rule of Benedict on monasteries.<sup>7</sup> The Anglo-Saxons of the seventh and eighth centuries had generally preferred their monasteries (*monasteria*, minsters) to be inclusive communities which could contain contemplatives (monks, hermits, or nuns) as well as clergy who were pastorally active. During the ninth century, partly due to political and financial pressures, the pastoral element ended up predominating, since it was cheaper to provide, was essential for the spiritual guidance of the laity, and also had the support of bishops, who took over a great many minsters in this period. It is customary to blame the Vikings for the fading out of contemplative, or strictly 'monastic', life in ninth-century England, and they certainly caused a great deal of disruption, but they were by no means the only factor involved.<sup>8</sup> At all events, by the dawn of the tenth century the minsters of Anglo-Saxon England seem to have been mostly staffed by communities of clergy.<sup>9</sup> Another point to note about them is that they sometimes (and since evidence for this period is very sparse this might actually have been quite often) were given by kings to favoured clergy,

University Press, 1995), pp. 622–53 (pp. 630–34); Patrick Wormald, 'Æthelwold and his Continental Counterparts: Contact, Comparison, Contrast', in *Bishop Æthelwold: His Career and Influence*, ed. by Barbara Yorke (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1988), pp. 13–42 (pp. 15–19), and literature there cited.

<sup>7</sup> John Blair, *The Church in Anglo-Saxon Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 80, 92, 346; Joanna Story, *Carolingian Connections: Anglo-Saxon England and Carolingian Francia, c. 750–870* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), pp. 205–09.

<sup>8</sup> Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, pp. 292–329; on episcopal takeovers of minsters, see *ibid.*, pp. 323–29 and the following: Patrick Sims-Williams, *Religion and Literature in Western England, 600–800*, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England, 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 169–71; William M. Aird, *St Cuthbert and the Normans: The Church of Durham, 1071–1153* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1998), pp. 19–26; Julia Barrow, 'Survival and Mutation: Ecclesiastical Institutions in the Danelaw in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries', in *Cultures in Contact: Scandinavian Settlement in England in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, ed. by Dawn M. Hadley and Julian D. Richards (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), pp. 155–76 (p. 157); Francesca Tinti, 'The "Costs" of Pastoral Care: Church Dues in Late Anglo-Saxon England', in *Pastoral Care in Late Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. by Francesca Tinti (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005), pp. 27–51 (pp. 43, 46–47).

<sup>9</sup> Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, pp. 344–45.

in particular bishops or future bishops (Alfred the Great's gift of Congresbury and Banwell minsters to Asser is a case in point): a bishop, often from a quite different see, might be the nominal abbot of a minster and draw most of the revenues from it, leaving a small core of resident clergy to provide services.<sup>10</sup>

By the mid-tenth century, however, ecclesiastical patrons across western Europe, notably the counts of Flanders, Duke Hugh in Western Francia, the Ottonians, and King Edgar of England, showed a clear preference for Benedictine monasticism, apparently chiefly on liturgical grounds.<sup>11</sup> Observant Benedictines were regarded as more disciplined than clerks, and very probably spent more time in choir than clerks, who, since they were often married, would have had family commitments.<sup>12</sup> Benedictine services would have been more regular and more elaborate than those held by clergy. Evidence for book production and ownership suggests that Benedictines set more store by learning than clerks did, and that they had more effective schools, such as Æthelwold's at Winchester,<sup>13</sup> though it must be admitted that this picture may be slanted towards the monks. Clerks owning books might have done so independently rather than as communities, with the result that collections would not have been built up: this may be why the picture of clerical

<sup>10</sup> *Asser's Life of King Alfred, Together with the Annals of St Neots Erroneously Ascribed to Asser*, ed. by William Henry Stevenson, reissued with introduction by Dorothy Whitelock (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), pp. 67–68 (c. 81); for translation, see *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred and Other Contemporary Sources*, trans. by Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983), p. 97; for comment, see Julia Barrow, 'Wulfstan and Worcester: Bishop and Clergy in the Early Eleventh Century', in *Wulfstan, Archbishop of York: The Proceedings of the Second Alcuin Conference*, ed. by Matthew Townend, *Studies in the Early Middle Ages*, 10 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), pp. 141–59 (pp. 157–58), and Julia Barrow, 'The Chronology of the Benedictine "Reform" in Edgar's Reign', in *Edgar the Peaceable*, ed. by Donald Scragg (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2008), pp. 211–23 (pp. 215–16 and 221–22).

<sup>11</sup> Joachim Wollasch, 'Monasticism: The First Wave of Reform', in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. III: c. 900–1024, ed. by Timothy Reuter (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 163–85 (pp. 169–74).

<sup>12</sup> Blair, *Church in Anglo-Saxon Society*, pp. 42, 351, 354, and, though on a later period, 361, 491, 493.

<sup>13</sup> Wulfstan of Winchester, *Life of St Æthelwold*, ed. and trans. by Michael Lapidge and Michael Winterbottom, *Oxford Medieval Texts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. xcii–xcix; Michael Lapidge, 'Schools, Learning and Literature in Tenth-Century England', in his *Anglo-Latin Literature, 900–1066* (London: Hambledon, 1993), pp. 1–48 (pp. 36–39 and 43–46) (originally published in *Settimane di Studio del Centro italiano di Studi sull'alto medioevo*, 38 (1991), 951–98); Helmut Gneuss, 'The Origin of Standard Old English and Æthelwold's School at Winchester', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 1 (1972), 63–83, esp. pp. 74–81.

book ownership and use is much harder to observe.<sup>14</sup> It seems likely, moreover, that clergy had a less systematic approach to education than monks did, sometimes educating each other one-to-one rather than in schools.<sup>15</sup>

Within England, specifically, various rulers from Alfred onwards had shown an interest in Benedictine monasticism, but without investing much wealth in it.<sup>16</sup> However the young Edgar had been taught from boyhood by Æthelwold (Abbot of Abingdon 954/55–63, then Bishop of Winchester 963–84),<sup>17</sup> and was evidently inspired by his tutor to take an interest in the Rule of St Benedict.<sup>18</sup> Æthelwold attended Eadwig's court in at least some of the years 955–59,<sup>19</sup> but presumably did not lose touch with Edgar and certainly backed him when on the death of his brother Eadwig he became king of all England in 959. Dunstan, the senior Benedictine figure in mid-tenth-century England, had been sent into exile by Edgar's brother, and thus naturally adhered to Edgar when the latter became King of Mercia in 957.<sup>20</sup> The impetus for creating Benedictine houses became greater with the appointment of Æthelwold as Bishop of Winchester in November 963,<sup>21</sup> an

<sup>14</sup> M. B. Parkes, 'The Palaeography of the Parker Manuscript of the *Chronicle*, Laws and Sedulius, and Historiography at Winchester in the Late Ninth and Tenth Centuries', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 5 (1976), 149–71 (pp. 170–71).

<sup>15</sup> Cf. 'Councils of Edgar', c. 10 (in fact a synod held by Archbishop Wulfstan of York 1005x1008: *Councils and Synods with Other Documents Relating to the English Church*, vol. 1: *A.D. 871–1204*, 2 vols, ed. by Dorothy Whitelock, Martin Brett, and C. N. L. Brooke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), I, 318): 'ȝ riht is þæt ænig preost ne underfo oðres scolere butan þæs leafe þe he ær folgade' ('and it is right that no clerk receive the scholar of another without the permission of him whom he previously followed').

<sup>16</sup> David Dumville, 'King Alfred and the Tenth-Century Reform of the English Church', in his *Wessex and England from Alfred to Edgar* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992), pp. 185–205 (p. 193).

<sup>17</sup> Gretsch, *Intellectual Foundations*, pp. 238, 398; Barbara Yorke, 'Æthelwold and the Politics of the Tenth Century', in *Bishop Æthelwold*, ed. by Yorke, pp. 65–88 (p. 80).

<sup>18</sup> *Liber Eliensis*, ed. by E. O. Blake, Camden Third Series, 92 (London: Royal Historical Society, 1962), p. 111; 'An Account of King Edgar's Establishment of Monasteries', in *Councils and Synods*, ed. by Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke, I, 142–54 (pp. 148, 151).

<sup>19</sup> On Æthelwold at Eadwig's court, see Alan Thacker, 'Æthelwold and Abingdon', in *Bishop Æthelwold*, ed. by Yorke, pp. 43–64 (p. 52), and Simon Keynes, *An Atlas of Attestations in Anglo-Saxon Charters, c. 670–1066*, ASNC Texts and Studies, 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), Table XLVIII.

<sup>20</sup> N. P. Brooks, 'The Career of St Dunstan', in *St Dunstan: His Life, Times and Cult*, ed. by Nigel Ramsay, Margaret Sparks, and Tim Tatton-Brown (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1992), pp. 1–23 (pp. 14–20).

<sup>21</sup> Wulfstan of Winchester, *Life of St Æthelwold*, ed. by Lapidge and Winterbottom, p. 30 (c. 16).

event which was followed not long afterwards, probably in 964, by Edgar's marriage to Ælfthryth, his second or perhaps his third wife, who took a keen interest in the movement.<sup>22</sup> Æthelwold wanted to establish communities of Benedictine monks or nuns in minster churches, on the assumption that these had all originally been Benedictine;<sup>23</sup> obviously it was only possible to carry this out in the few cases where there were sufficient financial resources to do so, since Benedictine communities required lavish endowments. Where such endowment was possible, he wished to expel communities of clerks serving these churches in order to bring in monks. He had a low opinion of clergy, since they did not live according to a Rule and were often married. He wanted to enforce strict observation of the Benedictine Rule, with some Carolingian modifications, on the new monastic houses, and he wanted inmates of each house to have the freedom to elect their own abbot or abbess, preferably from within their own number but if not then from another house of repute.<sup>24</sup> He also envisaged a major role for Edgar, as king, in supervising monasteries, and, as a corollary, Queen Ælfthryth was to have direct supervision of Benedictine nunneries.<sup>25</sup>

### *Figurative Language*

I now want to turn to the question of how Æthelwold — the principal propagandist for the Benedictines in England — justified the actions (many of which look now, and certainly did then, illegal) which were undertaken to install Benedictine monks. Æthelwold has emerged over the last thirty years as the leading spokesman

<sup>22</sup> Yorke, 'Æthelwold and the Politics of the Tenth Century', pp. 81–83; Pauline Stafford, 'Queens, Nunneries and Reforming Churchmen: Gender, Religious Status and Reform in Tenth- and Eleventh-Century England', *Past and Present*, 163 (1999), 3–35 (p. 1, n. 1).

<sup>23</sup> Wormald, 'Æthelwold and his Continental Counterparts', pp. 39, 41.

<sup>24</sup> *Regularis Concordia: The Monastic Agreement of the Monks and Nuns of the English Nation*, ed. and trans. by Thomas Symons (Edinburgh: Nelson, 1953), p. 6.

<sup>25</sup> *Regularis Concordia*, ed. by Symons, p. 2 and cf. also p. 7; on the financial significance of this role to Ælfthryth and to later Anglo-Saxon queens, see Pauline Stafford, 'Cherchez la femme: Queens, Queens' Lands and Nunneries. Missing Links in the Foundation of Reading Abbey', *History*, 85 (2000), 4–27 (pp. 11–14), and also Stafford, 'Queens, Nunneries and Reforming Churchmen', pp. 18, 24–30; see also Marc Anthony Meyer, 'The Queen's "Demesne" in Later Anglo-Saxon England', in *The Culture of Christendom: Essays in Medieval History in Commemoration of Denis L. T. Bethell*, ed. by Marc Anthony Meyer (London: Hambledon, 1993), pp. 75–113 (pp. 98–100).

in the process. Our understanding of the literature produced by the English Benedictines has enormously expanded over the last three decades, mainly thanks to intensive work by German Anglo-Saxonists on the 'Winchester School' (essentially Æthelwold and his pupils).<sup>26</sup> Helmut Gneuss has shown their role in the production of liturgical manuscripts,<sup>27</sup> Michael Lapidge has shown us Æthelwold's influence on his pupils at Winchester and liturgical developments there in the later tenth century,<sup>28</sup> and Alexander Rumble has commented in detail on the phrasing of the New Minster foundation charter.<sup>29</sup> In particular, Mechthild Gretsch has clarified our picture of the field by examining Æthelwold's literary style, finding good reasons to attribute a wider range of writings to him than has been done hitherto and to confirm existing hypotheses about his work and influence.<sup>30</sup> We can now see that all the major pieces of Benedictine propaganda produced in England in Edgar's reign were written by Æthelwold. They include the texts which I will principally be using: the New Minster foundation (more properly, refoundation) charter of 966, the Proem to *Regularis Concordia* (the whole text is Æthelwoldian, but the proem is particularly programmatic), and the Old English account of

<sup>26</sup> See, in particular, Mechthild Gretsch, *Die Regula Sancti Benedicti in England und ihre altenglische Übersetzung*, Texte und Untersuchungen zur englischen Philologie, 2 (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1973); Walter Hofstetter, *Winchester und der spätdenglische Sprachgebrauch: Untersuchungen zur geographischen und zeitlichen Verbreitung altenglischer Synonyme*, Texte und Untersuchungen zur englischen Philologie, 14 (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1987); Walter Hofstetter, 'Winchester and the Standardization of Old English Vocabulary', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 17 (1988), 139–61; Mechthild Gretsch, 'The Benedictine Rule in Old English: A Document of Bishop Æthelwold's Reform Politics', in *Words, Texts and Manuscripts: Studies in Anglo-Saxon Culture Presented to Helmut Gneuss on the Occasion of his Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. by Michael Korhammer (Cambridge: Brewer, 1992), pp. 131–58; *Die Regularis Concordia und ihre altenglische Interlinearversion*, ed. by Lucia Kornexl, Texte und Untersuchungen zur englischen Philologie, 17 (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1993); Gretsch, *Intellectual Foundations*; Brigitte Langefeld, *The Old English Version of the Enlarged Rule of Chrodegang, Edited together with the Latin Text and an English Translation*, Münchener Universitätschriften, 26 (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2003).

<sup>27</sup> Helmut Gneuss, 'Liturgical Books in Anglo-Saxon England and their Old English Terminology', in *Learning and Literature in Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. by Michael Lapidge and Helmut Gneuss (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 91–141.

<sup>28</sup> Wulfstan of Winchester, *Life of St Æthelwold*, ed. by Lapidge and Winterbottom, pp. lx–lxxxv, xcii–xcix, cxii–cxliii.

<sup>29</sup> Alexander R. Rumble, *Property and Piety in Early Medieval Winchester: Documents Relating to the Topography of the Anglo-Saxon and Norman City and its Minsters*, Winchester Studies, 4.3 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), pp. 65–97.

<sup>30</sup> Gretsch, *Intellectual Foundations*, pp. 2–5 and passim.

*Edgar's Establishment of Monasteries*.<sup>31</sup> These will be dealt with in turn, and some other texts will also be brought in: the anonymous letter, probably by Æthelwold, to Count Arnulf II of Flanders,<sup>32</sup> some charters, and two *Vitae* written by the following generation, Wulfstan Cantor's *Life of Æthelwold* and Byrhtferth of Ramsey's *Life of Oswald*.<sup>33</sup>

Thanks to work by David Johnson and Alexander Rumble we now have a deeper appreciation of the detail, comprehensiveness, and vim of the elaborate theological programme worked out by Æthelwold in the 966 New Minster charter.<sup>34</sup> The theology runs right the way through the charter — as Rumble says, theology, charter diplomatic, and Benedictine regulations are intertwined throughout the text — but it is the overwhelmingly dominant element in the whole opening third of the charter.<sup>35</sup> The theology is a history of creation and salvation, and it begins with God's creation of the angels in all their splendour, before the creation of the material world. The angels, exercising free will, are arrogant, refuse to serve their creator, and are plunged into the depths of hell; their removal is described with the words *eliminata tumidi fastus spurcitia*, 'the filth of arrogant disdain having been eliminated'.<sup>36</sup> Johnson pointed out the similarities between this passage and *Genesis A*; one of the similarities is the observation that the fall of

<sup>31</sup> For the New Minster refoundation charter (P. H. Sawyer, *Anglo-Saxon Charters: An Annotated List and Bibliography* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1968) (hereafter cited as S, by number), no. 745), see Rumble, *Property and Piety*, pp. 65–97, and *Councils and Synods*, ed. by Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke, I, 119–33; for the Proem to *Regularis Concordia*, see *ibid.*, pp. 133–41 as well as *Regularis Concordia*, ed. by Symons, pp. 1–9; for 'Edgar's Establishment of Monasteries', see *Councils and Synods*, ed. by Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke, I, 142–54.

<sup>32</sup> *Memorials of St Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. by William Stubbs, Rolls Series, 63 (London: Longman, 1874), pp. 361–62; on the authorship and the probable identity of the recipient, see Michael Lapidge, 'Æthelwold as Scholar and Teacher', in *Bishop Æthelwold*, ed. by Yorke, pp. 89–117 (pp. 96–98).

<sup>33</sup> S 658, 670, 673, 694, 745, 779, 786, 788, 791, 812, 876; Wulfstan of Winchester, *Life of St Æthelwold*, ed. by Lapidge and Winterbottom; *Vita S. Oswaldi*, in Byrhtferth of Ramsey, *The Lives of St Oswald and St Ecgwine*, ed. and trans. by Michael Lapidge (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2009), pp. 1–203.

<sup>34</sup> David F. Johnson, 'The Fall of Lucifer in *Genesis A* and Two Anglo-Latin Royal Charters', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 97 (1998), 500–21; Rumble, *Property and Piety*, pp. 65–97.

<sup>35</sup> Rumble, *Property and Piety*, p. 67.

<sup>36</sup> Rumble, *Property and Piety*, p. 75. The earliest English charter to make reference to the angelic creation is S 221, issued by Æthelred and Æthelflæd of Mercia for Much Wenlock in 901.

the angels left the bright thrones of heaven empty of worshippers, and that God created Man to fill the gap.<sup>37</sup> In the pleasant place of Paradise, Man lived a life of virtue, until the Devil tempted Woman, and through her Man, to taste the fruit, and for this act of disobedience (*contemnentes Creatorem*, 'spurning the Creator'), they were expelled (*eliminati* again) from Paradise. But then God had mercy on the sinful human race, the morning star shone, and the virginal Mary gave birth to Christ, who redeemed mankind, snatched the prey from the mouth of the lion (Ps. 22 (21 in Vulgate numbering). 21; II Tim. 4. 17), and ascended to glory in heaven. Finally the theological statement summarizes the duties and eventual rewards of Christians: those who believe in the Trinity and perform good works will enjoy Christ's glory, and punishment in hell awaits those who do not.<sup>38</sup>

Edgar, in the first person, now makes his appearance in the charter, stating that he wishes to enjoy the glory of Christ and the saints and thus wishes to do good deeds. Edgar is made to quote Jeremiah 1. 10: 'See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant' — a quotation much loved by religious innovators across the centuries; the 'planting' motif, for example, was very popular with the Cistercians.<sup>39</sup> Exhorted by the Lord's teaching expressed by the prophet Jeremiah, Edgar has done on earth what Christ has done in heaven, by removing the filth of crimes from the worship of the Lord and by sowing the seeds of virtue like a careful farmer.<sup>40</sup> This provides the context for the next section, headed, 'Qua ratione clericos eliminans monachos collocavit'. Edgar, fearing eternal misery if he does not do what the Lord has commanded, has, as the vicar of Christ, eliminated (*eliminavi*) the ranks (*cuneos*) of vicious canons from various minsters (*coenobiis*) of his kingdom.<sup>41</sup> The canons' intercessions had not profited Edgar, and he has replaced them with ranks (*cuneos*) of monks, acceptable to the Lord, who have prayed for Edgar unhesitatingly (*incunctanter*). New Minster has been cleansed by the flame of the Holy Spirit, and Edgar has driven out the lascivious clerks to replace them with true worshippers of God.<sup>42</sup> If the Devil inspires the arrogant

<sup>37</sup> Johnson, 'Fall of Lucifer', p. 516.

<sup>38</sup> Rumble, *Property and Piety*, pp. 75–79.

<sup>39</sup> Rumble, *Property and Piety*, p. 80; for a Cistercian parallel, see Louis J. Lekai, *The Cistercians: Ideal and Reality* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1977), p. 444.

<sup>40</sup> Rumble, *Property and Piety*, p. 80.

<sup>41</sup> Rumble, *Property and Piety*, p. 81.

<sup>42</sup> Rumble, *Property and Piety*, p. 81.

canons to try to throw out the flock of monks which Edgar has established at New Minster, may they suffer the torments of hell.<sup>43</sup>

This is the fullest and most explicit ideological statement made by Æthelwold on the role of Benedictine monasticism, and several of the ideas expounded here crop up in other texts. Particularly noteworthy here is the explicit parallel, underlined by repetition of certain words, between the expulsion of the proud angels from Heaven, the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Paradise, and the expulsion of the proud and lascivious canons from the minsters, including New Minster.<sup>44</sup> The naming of filth (*spurcitia*) as a quality of both the rebellious angels and the clergy is another significant theme. Æthelwold links the terms 'filth' and 'clergy' (or canons) several times in his writings:<sup>45</sup> the reason for this was presumably that, since clergy were often married (hence his reference to them as 'lascivious'), he, like other Benedictines, regarded them as impure and thought that they ought not to serve altars or engage in any form of divine service. A similar metaphor is used in the tenth-century *Life of John of Gorze* where the church of Gorze is said to have had filth lying round its altars before it was turned back into a monastery.<sup>46</sup> But the fact that tenth-century English clergy did not live by a Rule also counted against them in Æthelwold's eyes: this meant that they were not obedient.<sup>47</sup> In contrast to the erring clergy, monks are compared with the men whom God created to be his true worshippers, redeemed like the rest of mankind by Christ, and because of their obedience, acceptable to God as his worshippers. Edgar is said to be *vicarius Christi*, Christ's representative, and his work on earth is explicitly compared with Christ's work in heaven.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Rumble, *Property and Piety*, p. 83.

<sup>44</sup> Johnson, 'Fall of Lucifer', p. 520; Rumble, *Property and Piety*, p. 83, n. 61.

<sup>45</sup> Julia Barrow, 'English Cathedral Communities and Reform in the Late Tenth and the Eleventh Centuries', in *Anglo-Norman Durham, 1093–1193*, ed. by David Rollason, Margaret Harvey, and Michael Prestwich (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1994), pp. 25–39 (p. 35).

<sup>46</sup> 'Ita ut iuxta altaria ipsa vestigia foeda animalium deprehenderet': *Vita Iohannis abbatis Gorziensis auctore Iohanne abbate Sancti Arnulfi*, ed. by Georg Heinrich Pertz, MGH Scriptores, 4 (Hannover: Hahn, 1841), pp. 335–77 (p. 348 (c. 39)).

<sup>47</sup> Cf. the remarks about disobedience in Rumble, *Property and Piety*, pp. 81–82; on the reluctance of tenth-century English clergy to adopt rules, see Barrow, 'English Cathedral Communities', pp. 30–33.

<sup>48</sup> Rumble, *Property and Piety*, pp. 75 (human creation), 81 (Edgar as vicar of Christ), 82 (monks).

The explicit parallels between Edgar and Christ are also drawn in the Proem to *Regularis Concordia*, in which he is said to be 'like the shepherd of shepherds' protecting the Lord's sheep from the jaws of wolves (recalling the depiction of Christ the Good Shepherd in the Gospel of John (John 10. 14)).<sup>49</sup> The Proem opens with Edgar, King through Christ's grace, being taught the royal highway of Catholic faith by an unnamed abbot who is unquestionably Æthelwold.<sup>50</sup> Edgar learned that sacred *coenobia* in his kingdom were ruined (*diruta*) and were almost entirely destitute of the Lord's service, and thus he restored them by throwing out (*eiectisque*: it should be noted that *ei cere* is the most common verb for casting out demons in the synoptic Gospels in the Vulgate) the filth of the negligent clerics and by establishing monks and nuns under abbots and abbesses (termed fathers and mothers).<sup>51</sup> The concept of ruin and restoration again has echoes in the *Life of John of Gorze*,<sup>52</sup> and it also occurs in the letter of an anonymous English bishop (probably Æthelwold) to Count Arnulf of Flanders: the author commends Arnulf because ruined monasteries (*coenobia*) and shrines (*delubra*), their walls falling down and their roofs broken with decay, are now being restored for recovery (*instaurantur recuperanda*).<sup>53</sup> The restoration motif comes quite close to the 'reshaping' image of *reformatio*, but has slightly different overtones. It is linked more closely to images of building and rebuilding, a frequently occurring motif in tenth- and eleventh-century western European saints' lives, episcopal biographies, and ecclesiastical histories, in English sources cropping up, for example, in Wulfstan's *Vita Æthelwoldi*

<sup>49</sup> *Regularis Concordia*, ed. by Symons, p. 2, and *Councils and Synods*, ed. by Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke, I, 136–37; in the New Minster charter Edgar is made to remark that it is the King's duty to 'protect his Creator's pastures and flock': Rumble, *Property and Piety*, p. 89.

<sup>50</sup> *Regularis Concordia*, ed. by Symons, p. 1, and *Councils and Synods*, ed. by Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke, I, 136; see also Gretsch, *Intellectual Foundations*, p. 238.

<sup>51</sup> *Regularis Concordia*, ed. by Symons, pp. 1–2, and *Councils and Synods*, ed. by Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke, I, 136; for use of *ei cere* in the synoptic Gospels in the Vulgate see Matthew 7. 22, 8. 16, 8. 31, 9. 33–34, 10. 1, 10. 8, 10. 24, 10. 26–28, 17. 18, 17. 20; Mark 1. 34, 1. 39, 3. 15, 3. 22–23, 6. 13, 7. 26, 9. 17, 9. 27, 9. 37, 16. 9, 16. 17; and Luke 9. 40, 9. 49, 11. 14 (bis), 11. 15, 11. 18–20, 13. 32; *ei cere* for casting out the money-changers from the Temple: Matthew 21. 12; Mark 11. 15; Luke 19. 45.

<sup>52</sup> *Vita Iohannis abbatis Gorziensis*, ed. by Pertz, p. 349 (c. 41).

<sup>53</sup> *Memorials of St Dunstan*, ed. by Stubbs, pp. 361–62 (p. 362). Cf. also similar imagery of ruin (though with different wording) in a forged charter of Edgar in William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum: The History of the English Kings*, ed. and trans. by R. A. B. Mynors, R. M. Thomson, and Michael Winterbottom, 2 vols, Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998–99), I, 248–51, with commentary II, 152 (S 796).

(Abingdon, Ely, and Peterborough), in Byrhtferth's *Vita Oswaldi* (Ramsey), and in the narrative near the start of the New Minster *Liber Vitae* (the great tower at New Minster).<sup>54</sup> Building was not just a meritorious act, but also a holy one: churchmen were conscious of the image of Christ as the cornerstone.<sup>55</sup>

In the Old English account of *Edgar's Establishment of Monasteries*, which unfortunately does not survive complete, the historical nature of the text allows a slightly different range of metaphors and images. The opening section is missing; then we find the light of faith illuminating even the outermost island of the world, that inhabited by the Anglo-Saxons, after Gregory I decided to cleanse it of paganism (here we find the cleansing motif again). Gregory sent Augustine, ordering him to lead an Apostolic life with his followers: 'all things were common with them' (Acts 4. 32).<sup>56</sup> There is then another gap in the text, and when it starts again we find Edgar in his youth, recognized by God as a 'true steward' of churches even before he became King. Edgar was generous to Abingdon, rebuilding it and having it consecrated to St Mary, and gathering Benedictine monks there, taking them from Glastonbury (then the only monastery in England observing the Rule of Benedict). Edgar was 'gladdened by that spiritual beginning (*angin*) with monks'; he wanted to 'rectify' his life (the verb used, OE *gerihtlæcan*, contains the meaning of healing as well as rectifying).<sup>57</sup> Next, Æthelwold, the author of *Edgar's Establishment of Monasteries*, elaborates the ideas of beginning and rectifying: 'It is also written in books, "He who plans to begin a good work, let him make a beginning with himself".' Æthelwold says that after Edgar had been corrected himself (*geriht wearð*), he then set about rectifying (*to rihtlæcynne*) monasteries.<sup>58</sup> He cleansed them from the foulnesses of men, and 'drove out canons who abounded beyond

<sup>54</sup> Wulfstan of Winchester, *Life of St Æthelwold*, ed. by Lapidge and Winterbottom, pp. 38–41 (Ely and Peterborough); *Vita S. Oswaldi*, in Byrhtferth, *Lives of St Oswald and St Ecgwine*, p. 99; *The Liber Vitae of the New Minster and Hyde Abbey, Winchester: British Library Stowe 944*, ed. by Simon Keynes, *Early English Manuscripts in Facsimile*, 26 (Copenhagen: Rosenkilde and Bagger, 1996), fols 11<sup>v</sup>–12<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>55</sup> Luke 20. 17; Ephesians 2. 20; 1 Peter 2. 7.

<sup>56</sup> *Councils and Synods*, ed. by Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke, I, 145.

<sup>57</sup> *Councils and Synods*, ed. by Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke, I, 149.

<sup>58</sup> *Councils and Synods*, ed. by Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke, I, 149; the wording suggests a connection with the concept of *correctio*, common in the earlier medieval Church in contexts in which late medieval churchmen might have used *reformatio*: cf. Barrow, 'Ideas and Application', pp. 350, 356–57.

measure in [...] sins', and placed monks 'in the foremost places'.<sup>59</sup> Here again we find the linking of clerics with filth and the cleansing motif. Cleansing and rectifying are concepts which are analogous to reforming, but they are not synonymous, and 'beginning' is a different concept from reforming, lacking its theological overtones of transformation.

Other texts from Edgar's reign are less programmatic. Examination of Edgar's charters shows that the New Minster 966 charter was exceptional, both in its theological ideas and in its dispositive clauses. The latter, rather than conveying property, the most common type of dispositive clause in pre-Conquest English charters, lay down rules about the internal organization of New Minster, including the election of abbots.<sup>60</sup> The group of charters known as the *Orthodoxorum* charters (Eadwig for Abingdon (S 658), Edgar for Abingdon, Pershore, Worcester, and Romsey (S 673, 786, 788, 812), Æthelred for Abingdon (S 876)) come closest to S 745 both theologically, since they expound the creation of Adam, the Incarnation, and the Redemption, and also dispositively (for example, granting free abbatial elections and referring to *cunei* of monks or nuns), but are less elaborate, and, in spite of Susan Kelly's recent attempt to claim that all of them are genuine save the Edgar charter for Worcester, may well all date from the reign of Æthelred.<sup>61</sup> Presumably S 745 acted as a model for them. Other Edgar charters with elaborate monastic vocabulary are also for various reasons (not the monastic vocabulary) suspect: for example S 779 (Edgar for Ely, 970), which uses vocabulary also to be found in *Regularis Concordia* (*tapescere, opitulante*),<sup>62</sup> or S 694 (Edgar for Bath, 961), which comes close to S 745 by referring to St Peter as 'the blessed [...] cultivator of ecclesiastical seeds', which is reminiscent of the description of Edgar as a farmer in

<sup>59</sup> *Councils and Synods*, ed. by Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke, I, 150.

<sup>60</sup> In this respect this charter is very similar to Byzantine *typika* or monastic foundation documents, on which see *Byzantine Monastic Foundation Documents: A Complete Translation of the Surviving Founders' Typika and Testaments*, ed. by John Thomas and Angela Constantinides Hero, 5 vols (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 2000).

<sup>61</sup> *Charters of Abingdon Abbey*, ed. by S. E. Kelly, 2 vols, Anglo-Saxon Charters, 7–8 (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 2000–01), I, pp. lxxxiv–cxv; see also Simon Keynes, *The Diplomas of King Æthelred 'the Unready', 978–1016: A Study in their Use as Historical Evidence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), pp. 98–100.

<sup>62</sup> *Tabescerent and opitulante* in *Councils and Synods*, ed. by Whitelock, Brett, and Brooke, I, 136; for judgements on S 779, see *Liber Eliensis*, ed. by Blake, pp. 414–15, and (more favourably) A. Kennedy, 'Law and Opinion in the *Libellus Æthelwoldi Episcopi*', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 24 (1995), 131–83 (pp. 141, 150–51).

S 745.<sup>63</sup> A late tenth- or early eleventh-century Edgar fake, for Westminster, dated 951, perhaps for 959, says that a grant is to repair ruined ecclesiastical accommodation and to teach monastic regulations: ‘ad reparanda diruta pastiforia (houses in the Temple) aecclisiae et instituta monasterii informanda’ (S 670).<sup>64</sup> Genuine charters of Edgar for Benedictine communities are not very different in language from Edgar’s charters for other beneficiaries. The *arengae*, usually favouring themes such as the transitoriness of earthly things or the penalties of the Last Judgement, are similar, and so too are the sanction clauses. However, charters drafted by ‘Edgar A’ for Benedictine houses do often use the phrase ‘ad usus monachorum (sanctimonialium) (in)ibi degentium’, or sometimes just ‘ad usus monachorum’, and they quite often specify the saint to whom the monastic house is dedicated.<sup>65</sup> S 791, a ‘Dunstan B’ charter issued by Edgar for Glastonbury in 973, has ‘ad supplementum necessarium fraterne conversacionis ibidem Deo servientium’.<sup>66</sup>

So, should the ‘reform’ process be seen as a ‘reform’? The imagery is of cleansing, possibly even exorcism, followed by repairing, and, on a cosmic plane, redemption. The practical terms which crop up most often are ‘monks’, ‘nuns’, ‘rule’, especially in combination with St Benedict, and derivatives of Latin *regula*, for example *regulariter*. Æthelwold and his colleagues clearly saw what they were doing as a major and significant change, which required all the resources of theological exposition for its justification, but, useful though modern scholars may find the term ‘reform’ to describe what they were undertaking, there is a risk of anachronism in using it, in that we may be tempted to view tenth-century change as an integral part of what was to follow. ‘Reform’ is best restricted to monastic change in the eleventh and more especially in the twelfth century. What Æthelwold and his colleagues were doing might be better summed up in their own words as ‘cleansing’ or ‘exorcising’, or, more neutrally, as ‘monasticizing’ or ‘regularizing’.

<sup>63</sup> S 694, though based on a genuine ‘Dunstan B’ charter, is spurious: Simon Keynes, ‘The “Dunstan B” Charters’, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 23 (1994), 165–93 (pp. 177, 182).

<sup>64</sup> Keynes, “Dunstan B” Charters’, p. 177.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. S 765, 766, 777, and, without *degentium*, 744, 781; the phrase can also occur in forgeries, for example S 689.

<sup>66</sup> On S 791, see Keynes, “Dunstan B” Charters’, p. 178.

## FROM PISA TO THE PATRIARCHATE: CHAPTERS IN THE LIFE OF (ARCH)BISHOP DAIBERT

Patricia Skinner

At the time of his tragically early death, Timothy Reuter had just been awarded funding to carry out research into the episcopate of eleventh- and twelfth-century Europe. He had already published numerous articles exploring the religious and political symbolism of episcopal power,<sup>1</sup> and it is tempting to speculate that, had he been able to carry out his intended project, his attention would have been drawn to the case of Daibert of Pisa as an example of a prelate caught between the twin demands of reform religion and political pragmatism. Daibert, as is well known, rose to prominence as Bishop, and later Archbishop, of Pisa before departing for the Holy Land in 1098 in the wake of the first crusaders. Becoming Patriarch of Jerusalem, he was deposed (twice) and then reinstated, but died in 1105 returning East from his personal appeal to Pope Paschal II.<sup>2</sup>

Given his high visibility in some of the most profound political and social changes of the period — the investiture contest (he had originally been associated with the imperial cause); the development of communal forms of government in Italy (he appears to have been one of the few bishops who emerged relatively unscathed from

<sup>1</sup> See in particular Timothy Reuter, 'Episcopi cum sua militia: The Prelate as Warrior in the Early Staufer Era', in *Warriors and Churchmen in the High Middle Ages: Essays Presented to Karl Leyser*, ed. by Timothy Reuter (London: Hambledon, 1992), pp. 79–94; Reuter, 'Pastorale pedum ante pedes apostolici posuit: Dis- and Re-investiture in the Era of the Investiture Contest', in *Belief and Culture in the Middle Ages: Studies Presented to Henry Mayr-Harting*, ed. by Richard Gameson and Henrietta Leyser (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 197–210.

<sup>2</sup> A rapid survey of Daibert's career may be found in the *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, vol. XXXI (Rome: Società Grafica Romana, 1985) (hereafter *DBI*), s.v. Daiberto, pp. 679–84, where the date of his death is given as 1107.

the process); and the sheer enormity that was the First Crusade (in the aftermath of which he rose to even greater prominence) — it is striking how little has been written (in English, at least) about an individual whose career epitomized the tensions of papal/imperial relations at the end of the eleventh century and the widening horizons of medieval Europe at the beginning of the twelfth. In fact, Daibert's career *as a whole* has only received three historical treatments, and he is most visible to an Anglophone audience only as a figure in crusade historiography. In this chapter I hope to explore the changing contexts in which we find Daibert, and to suggest that it is his very mobility and the different types of source which recount each stage of his career which appear to have led to his life being treated as a series of largely unconnected stages by historians interested in very different historical themes.<sup>3</sup>

Nowhere is this separation more starkly underlined than in the scholarly reviews of the one exception to this rule, Michael Matzke's comprehensive study of Daibert.<sup>4</sup> Matzke recognized the need to reintegrate the piecemeal history of Daibert's career, highlighting the fact that the Bishop had been the subject of only two previous studies, a patriotic, Pisan eighteenth-century version, and the brief biographical sketch in the *DBI*.<sup>5</sup> Yet reviewers of the work have disagreed profoundly as to whether Matzke's rehabilitation of Daibert, who gained a 'shady reputation'<sup>6</sup> during his time in the Holy Land, really convinces. His insistence that Daibert's actions as patriarch were inspired by religious idealism, trying to perpetuate and implement the intentions of his patron Pope Urban II, is largely accepted by Alan Murray, whilst James Brundage views this conclusion with scepticism.<sup>7</sup> Their contrasting opinions, of course, emerge partly from these distinguished historians' own specialist backgrounds. For Murray, the crusading historian, the legalities of

<sup>3</sup> For example, F. Cardini treats him primarily as a crusader: 'Profilo di un crociato: Daibert arcivescovo di Pisa', in Cardini, *Studi sulla storia e sull'idea di crociata* (Rome: Jouvence, 1993), pp. 85–106.

<sup>4</sup> Michael Matzke, *Daibert von Pisa: Zwischen Pisa, Papst und erstem Kreuzzug* (Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1998). Reviews by E. Cristiani in *Archivio Storico Italiano*, 159 (2001), 851; T. Struve in *Historisches Jahrbuch*, 120 (2000), 448–450; F. van Tricht in *Revue d'Histoire Ecclesiastique*, 95 (2000), 216–19; J. Richard in *Le Moyen Âge*, 105 (1999), 557–58; H. E. J. Cowdrey in *Catholic Historical Review*, 85 (1999), 447–48; F. Panarelli in *Quaderni Medievali*, 47 (1999), 329–32; and see notes 6 and 7 below.

<sup>5</sup> See above, note 2. Matzke, *Daibert von Pisa*, p. 13.

<sup>6</sup> James A. Brundage, review of Matzke, *Daibert von Pisa*, in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 51 (2000), 134.

<sup>7</sup> Alan V. Murray, review of Matzke, *Daibert von Pisa*, in *Speculum*, 78 (2003), 954–56; Brundage, review of Matzke, p. 134.

Daibert's actions (discussed below) are less significant than they are for Brundage, the expert on canon law. How, then, can we approach this enigmatic figure of medieval history, who so polarizes opinions? I should like to try a slightly different tack, and to re-examine Daibert's career by exploring the possible choices he had at each stage of its development and consider the limitations imposed on our knowledge by each individual type of evidence, or its lack.

I want to start with the Pisan context, which is reconstructed largely from charter material and papal documents. Here, from 1090 onwards, we see a sprinkling of documents concerning Daibert's interactions with the citizens of the see. In June of that year, a significant gift of land was made to the cathedral by two brothers, Albertus and Rainerius.<sup>8</sup> On 8 July 1091, we find two documents in the Pisa cathedral archive recording Bishop Daibert's grants to three brothers (two in one document, the other in the other) of land belonging to the cathedral (S. Maria) by *chartula libellario*, for each of them to work and pay a rent in Lucchese *denarii* each year.<sup>9</sup> The see of Pisa was raised to an archbishopric in 1092, and on 5 October 1094 Archbishop Daibert conceded to a group of smiths or metalworkers (*fabri*) the right to have their names inscribed into the cathedral's memorial book in return for their 'spontaneous' (*sponte*) donation of twenty *solidi* a year to the cathedral works (the Opera S. Mariae). He did this in consultation with the cathedral canons and in the presence of his archdeacon, Guido, Benzo the *primicerius*, four named laymen — Lambert the judge son of Lambert, son of Speciosi, Sicerius son of Sicerii de Matto, Henry son of Guilelmus de Stephano, Benedict son of Guilelmus de Cararia — as well as 'many others' (*plurimorum aliorum*).<sup>10</sup>

The apparently cordial relationship with the laymen in the document accords well with what we know of Daibert's previous dealings with Pisan notables. In what is by far the best-known Pisan document concerning the Bishop, he collaborated with — and lent his authority to — 'good men' of Pisa regulating the increasing heights of tower houses in the city in 1090.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, the document as

<sup>8</sup> *Regestum Pisanum / Regesto della Chiesa di Pisa*, ed. by Natale Caturegli, *Regestum Chartarum Italiae*, 24 (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, 1938) (hereafter *Reg. Pis.*), no 204, pp. 121–22.

<sup>9</sup> *Carte dell'archivio capitolare di Pisa* (hereafter *Carte*), vol. III: 1076–1100, ed. by Matilde Carelli Carli (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1977), documents 46 and 47, pp. 106–11 [= *Reg. Pis.*, no. 206, p. 123].

<sup>10</sup> *Carte*, document 59, pp. 138–40 [= *Reg. Pis.*, no. 212, p. 127].

<sup>11</sup> The document is edited by G. Rossetti, 'Il lodo del vescovo Daiberto sull'altezza delle torri', in *Pisa e la Toscana occidentale nel medioevo*, vol. II: *A Cinzio Violante nei suoi 70 anni* (Pisa: GISEM-ETS, 1991), pp. 25–31. On the dating of the document, see below, p. 161.

we have it shows Daibert as the protagonist and author, 'having with me as companions the energetic and wise men Peter the viscount, Roland and Stephen, Guinezone, Marinianus and Albert'. None of these feature in other documents involving Daibert, but the document goes on to name others whose towers are used either as measures of maximum height (Stephen son of Balduin and Lambert, Guinzonis son of Gontolinus) or who are excused from the limit being set (Hugh the viscount and the son of Albizo). Alongside the regulation of laymen's tower houses is an interesting sidelight on the tension which may have existed with certain religious in the city. The abbot and monks of S. Michele were ordered to add an altar and cupola to their tower, and 'invite the bishop to consecrate it in good faith by Christmas', or else they would be required to reduce the height of the tower to the new regulation. Furthermore, 'no-one else should take the bell-tower, nor go up in it, nor injure anyone from it'. Whether or not we interpret these difficulties and exceptions as a sign of weakness on the part of Daibert and his companions, the regulation, with its threat of excommunication for transgressors, was incorporated into the later consular oaths from the city. That of 1162 states:

Securitates quas fieri fecit episcopus Gerardus et archiepiscopus Daibertus, ne tempore huius mei consulatus rumpantur studium at operam dabo: quas in ecclesia Sanctæ Mariæ publice bis legere faciam.<sup>12</sup>

[I shall strive and work to ensure that the charters of security which Bishop Gerard and Archbishop Daibert had made should not be broken, and I will have them read out in public in the church of St Mary [i.e. the cathedral], twice.]

The 1164 version elaborates further, adding a financial penalty and the consul's 'damning (*damnificabo*)' of the transgressor.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, whilst the documentary basis of Daibert's career in Pisa is undoubtedly limited, it suggests that he was a well-respected figure in the city's political and economic life, whose powers of excommunication gave him an authority far beyond that of his lay contemporaries. This is not, however, the whole story.

As is well known, he had undergone something of a rehabilitation to reach the episcopal position, since it is thought that Daibert had originally been ordained into clerical orders as a deacon by Wezelo, Bishop of Mainz, who had in turn been excommunicated as a simoniac at the synod of Quedlinburg in 1085. What is unclear, however, is where Daibert stood in the papal-imperial contest for power over

<sup>12</sup> *I brevi dei consoli del commune di Pisa degli anni 1162 e 1164*, ed. by Ottavio Banti, *Fonti per la Storia d'Italia medievale, Antiquitates* 7 (Rome: Istituto Storico per il Medio Evo, 1997), p. 60.

<sup>13</sup> *I brevi dei consoli del commune di Pisa*, ed. by Banti, p. 88.

the Church which swirled across Germany and Italy in this period. The authors of his biography in the *DBI* are cautious, suggesting that Daibert, 'must have fought in the imperial ranks', because his ordination probably took place in Germany (there being no evidence that Wezelo had ever come to Italy). Thus, the authors argue, the Italian Daibert (his family background is in fact unknown, but Matzke argues convincingly against German or Frankish origins), must either have served at the imperial court or acted as an envoy to a synod held in Germany. Matzke dismisses the first theory and favours only a brief sojourn in Germany.<sup>14</sup> Given the regular movement between Germany and northern Italy in this period, however, it is equally possible, although lacking in documentary evidence, that Wezelo crossed the border South with one of Henry IV's campaigns in Italy.

The anthroponymic evidence places Daibert's origins in Lombardy/Emilia, site of some staunchly imperial cities. It has been hypothesized that Daibert may originally have served in the entourage of a northern bishop (Matzke suggests the Bishop of Modena).<sup>15</sup> If so, this may explain how Daibert then came into the orbit of Countess Matilda of Tuscany, leading to a change of affiliation and role. Modena is an ideal site for Daibert's change of sides, since the city had been the focus of papal-imperial rivalry. Bishop Eribert (d. 1094) had consecrated Wibert of Ravenna as antipope and had himself faced opposition from a Matildine candidate for the episcopacy, Benedict, elected sometime in the 1080s and dead by 1097.<sup>16</sup> Daibert's elevation to the Pisan see happened in 1088, and he became close to Matilda, one of the papacy's staunchest supporters. His irregular ordination was cancelled out by Pope Urban II, and shortly afterwards the same pope made him Bishop of Pisa.

Ironically, this may have left him in a uniquely precarious position, for Daibert's appointment would have attracted hostility from both sides. His predecessor, the Pisan Gerard, had died in 1085, and the see had therefore been vacant for nearly three years. Strikingly, the Pisan annals make no mention of Daibert's appointment, despite carefully recording the deaths of both Gerard and the earlier bishop,

<sup>14</sup> *DBI*, xxxi, 679. *The First Crusade: The Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres and Other Source Materials*, ed. by Edward Peters, 2nd edn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), p. 97, n., says that Daibert was in fact consecrated by the antipope Wibert of Ravenna. One of Urban's two letters defending Daibert from his critics, however, clearly names 'Guezelone heretico': Matzke, *Daibert von Pisa*, p. 34. On Daibert in Germany, *ibid.*, p. 36.

<sup>15</sup> Matzke, *Daibert von Pisa*, p. 25. He further suggests, p. 57, that if Daibert was in the Bishop's entourage, he may have accompanied the Bishop when he was sent by Matilda on the Pisan expedition against Al-Mahdiyya in 1087.

<sup>16</sup> Diana Webb, *Patrons and Defenders: The Saints in the Italian City-States* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1996), p. 60.

Guido.<sup>17</sup> Urban had to write to the abbot of the monastery of Vallombrosa, Rusticus, and the Bishop of Pistoia, Peter, to justify his faith in the innocence of a man whom both considered to be tainted with Wezelo's simony, and pointed to the Church's need — presumably to gain adherents as talented as Daibert to its cause — as the reason for his decision.<sup>18</sup> This and Urban's continued support seem to have allowed Daibert to establish a cooperative relationship, underpinned by authority, with his own cathedral chapter (initially opposed to his episcopate, as signalled by its absence from the gift to the cathedral in 1090<sup>19</sup>) and other churches and monastic institutions in the city. In 1092, he is seen engaging in landed exchanges with the priests of the church of SS Regulus and Felix in the city, to their mutual benefit, and with the approval of the cathedral clergy, some of whom sign the document.<sup>20</sup> In July 1098 he renewed the archbishopric's protection over the convent of St Luxorius, at the request of the nun Grima.<sup>21</sup> The pragmatic solution which Urban had found to Daibert's problematic ordination may have set the tone for Daibert's own practical approach to the problems which confronted him both at Pisa and later in his career.

We must not forget, however, that although the city lay within Countess Matilda's territory, it was not immune to pressure from continued imperial agitation: indeed, it had been an imperial stronghold. In 1081 Emperor Henry IV had issued a charter to his 'faithful Pisans' (none are named), confirming their rights and customs, and another privilege in 1089 to Hildebrand, described as viscount.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, charters issued in the city during the 1090s, whilst not referring to imperial rule in their dating clauses, were still written by 'royal notary', a reminder

<sup>17</sup> *Gli annales pisani di Bernardo Maragone*, ed. by Michele Lupo Gentile, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, 6, part 2 (Bologna: Zanichelli, 1930), p. 6. See, however, Chris Wickham's assessment of Maragone's intentions for his annals: 'The Sense of the Past in Italian Communal Narratives', in *The Perception of the Past in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. by Paul Magdalino (London: Hambledon, 1992), pp. 173–89, esp. pp. 177–80.

<sup>18</sup> Discussion of Urban's letters to these and the congregations of Vallombrosa and Camaldoli in Matzke, *Daibert von Pisa*, pp. 26–46.

<sup>19</sup> See above, note 8.

<sup>20</sup> *Reg. Pis.*, no. 210, pp. 125–26.

<sup>21</sup> *Reg. Pis.*, no. 215, p. 129. Despite the fact he addresses the document to Grima, suggesting a female house, the document refers to a free election from among 'the brothers' for the abbacy. Is this a double house?

<sup>22</sup> *Die Urkunden Heinrichs IV.*, vol. II, ed. by Dietrich von Gladiss, *MGH Diplomata regum et imperatorum Germaniae*, 6.2 (Weimar: Hermann Böhlhaus Nachfolger, 1959), document 336, pp. 442–43.

of the sovereignty still claimed by the German king, in competition, at the very least, with Daibert's sponsor, Matilda. Daibert's appointment, then, could be read as emphasizing papal authority over the city, and we might expect that, despite the appearance of business-like, even cordial, relations with some prominent Pisans, including at least one man with the title viscount, Daibert might also have experienced resistance from other sections of the Pisan aristocracy loyal to the Emperor.

The insecure position in which he found himself at the start of his episcopate — hostile clergy protesting his appointment, ambivalent cathedral chapter, and factionalized laity (Hyde comments that the city 'seems to [have] lacked institutionalized leaders'<sup>23</sup>) — has led Matzke to hypothesize that Daibert's famous 1090 settlement for the city should be dated rather earlier in his episcopate, and represented the Bishop's first steps in securing his authority.<sup>24</sup> If so, it clearly only had partial success, for despite being enshrined into later Pisan legislation, as we have seen, there was continued tension in the city, and a later document of 1129 sheds a rather different light on another of Daibert's agreements.

This document, issued by Archbishop Roger in 1129, refers to the 'spontaneous' donation of the *fabri* to the cathedral works in 1094, highlighted above, but provides a detail absent in the original gift. For in his preamble, Roger refers to the 'lacrimabilem ac miserabilem casum consulum Pis. Populi eorumque ministrorum, sententiam silicet [*sic*] anathematis Daiberti Pis. Eccl. Archiep. oblivioni et neglectui traditam' ('lachrymose and miserable case of the consuls and ministers of the Pisan people, handed over and sentenced to the oblivion and neglect of anathema by Daibert the Archbishop of Pisa'), a sentence of excommunication which Daibert removed 'intuito ac totius Pis. Populi animarum et corporum salutis' ('mindful of the bodily and spiritual health of the whole Pisan people'), and soon after received the 'spontaneous' donation.<sup>25</sup>

Daibert may therefore have experienced a turbulent decade as Pisa's pontiff, although we have no contemporary account of the dramatic rupture in relations with the citizens reported by Roger. Given that the Archbishop in 1129 was trying to renew the obligation of the metalworkers to make their annual payment to the

<sup>23</sup> J. K. Hyde, *Society and Politics in Medieval Italy* (London: Macmillan, 1973), p. 50.

<sup>24</sup> Matzke, *Daibert von Pisa*, pp. 61–67. His view is clearly shared by Ottavio Banti, whose edition of the document settles for a date range of 1088–92, that is, the period between Daibert's appointment and his promotion to archbishop: *I brevi dei consoli del commune di Pisa*, ed. by Banti, pp. 110–13.

<sup>25</sup> *Reg. Pis.*, no. 311, pp. 205–06. In fact Roger seems to be holding the threat of excommunication over the *fabri* in this document for their continued cooperation.

Opera S. Mariae, it may be that his tale of Daibert's actions in 1094 was simply a rhetorical flourish designed to instil fear into anyone resisting his demand. As such, therefore, it may better reflect his relationship with the Pisans than Daibert's. Nevertheless, Daibert's willingness to threaten excommunication for disobedience of the tower heights document suggests that he was not afraid to put such a sentence into effect.

His continuing close relationship with Urban and Matilda is not in doubt. In 1091 Urban, at Matilda's request, confirmed that the church of Corsica should remain under the control of the Pisan bishop and raised Daibert to archiepiscopal status the following year.<sup>26</sup> Bernold of Constance reports that Urban spent Christmas 1094 with Daibert, who had 'served him most assiduously, and whom he had raised to the archiepiscopal *pallium* and power'.<sup>27</sup> Read against the possible evidence (in Roger's 1129 document) of a near catastrophic dispute in autumn of 1094, Urban's visit might be seen as a vote of confidence in an embattled colleague. Daibert then accompanied the Pope on the latter's pastoral tour of Italy and France, including the councils of Piacenza and Clermont in 1094 and 1095. If there had been a major dispute, this trip may have allowed the Archbishop some breathing space. Such an absence from his see, whilst not unusual in the context of the time,<sup>28</sup> has led his biographers to comment that he remained detached from Pisa's political life.<sup>29</sup> Here though I think they confuse cause and effect: the early years of Daibert's episcopate, read through the charter evidence, suggest a man actively engaged in the political and spiritual life of Pisa, albeit an engagement with its low points, and indeed following Clermont he returned to the city to preach the crusade. The enthusiastic response he received extended even to his appointment as leader of a joint Pisan and Genoese naval expedition, which left in 1098.<sup>30</sup> Perhaps the crusade allowed both prelate and people a convenient way out of a difficult relationship, but it could equally well represent a vote of confidence in the abilities of a leader who had lasted ten years in tumultuous times and had successfully

<sup>26</sup> *Reg. Pis.*, no. 205, p. 122 and no. 207, pp. 123–24 (April 1092).

<sup>27</sup> *Bertholds und Bernolds Chroniken*, ed. by Ian Stuart Robinson, *Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters. Freiherr-vom-Stein-Gedächtnisausgabe*, 14 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2002), p. 408 (s.a. 1095).

<sup>28</sup> Reuter, '*Episcopi*', p. 87, for example, highlights the prolonged absences of German bishops from their sees when accompanying the emperor into Italy, and we have already seen the Bishop of Modena off on crusade to North Africa.

<sup>29</sup> *DBI*, XXXI, 680: 'D. rimanesse estraneo alla vita politica cittadina.'

<sup>30</sup> *Annales pisani*, p. 7, s.a. 1099 (Pisan years are AD + 1).

navigated the factional politics within the city which, in contrast to Genoa, had thus far prevented any alternative to episcopal authority emerging.<sup>31</sup>

Did Daibert's absence present problems for the Pisans? As we shall see later, it is possible to argue that some welcomed his absence and resisted his return to the see when he travelled westwards to defend his status as Patriarch of Jerusalem. But whilst a bishop was expected to defend the local interests of his see, Daibert's status as an outsider (there is nothing to suggest he had family ties in Pisa) was certainly not unusual in the context of the time. A Mantuan had occupied the see of Volterra, whilst Landulf, Bishop of Pisa in 1077, was Milanese.<sup>32</sup> In another imperial city, Verona, no bishop between the Carolingian era and the second quarter of the twelfth century was a local man, and in fact most were foreigners. Maureen Miller points to the importance of the Veronese cathedral chapter in maintaining local ecclesiastical traditions,<sup>33</sup> and although the evidence is sparse, we see a similar situation at Pisa, with a well-developed cathedral chapter able to take care of business in their archbishop's absence.<sup>34</sup>

But what was Daibert's status when he went East? The next area of controversy surrounding Daibert's career is the debate as to whether he sailed East simply as *rector et ductor* of the Pisan contingent, or whether he had official papal sanction as legate to the crusade, Urban's original legate, Adhemar of Le Puy, having died on 1 August 1098. Alfons Becker, in his biography of Urban, leaves the matter open: 'it is unclear', he says, 'whether Urban himself appointed a successor to Adhemar',

<sup>31</sup> We must of course bear in mind the contrast between our sources for the two cities: Caffaro's chronicle of Genoa is unique in its explicit description of the rotation of consuls in that city: *Annali genovesi di Caffaro e de'suoi continuatori*, ed. by L. T. Belgrano, 5 vols (Rome: Tipografia del Senato, 1890–1929), I, passim. On Caffaro, see also Richard Face, 'Secular History in Twelfth-Century Italy: Caffaro of Genoa', *Journal of Medieval History*, 6 (1980), 169–84; Wickham, 'Sense of the Past'; Antonio Placanica, 'L'opera storiografica di Caffaro', *Studi Medievali*, 3rd series, 36 (1995), 1–62.

<sup>32</sup> Matzke, *Daibert von Pisa*, p. 34.

<sup>33</sup> Maureen Miller, *The Formation of a Medieval Church: Ecclesiastical Change in Verona, 950–1150* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993), pp. 144 (foreigners) and 45 (chapter).

<sup>34</sup> Whilst Daibert was away, Matzke states, 'übernahmen das Domkapitel und insbesondere die von Daibert institutionalisierte und geförderte Domopera seine Funktion als geistlicher Mittelpunkt und Autorität für die Stadt' (*Daibert von Pisa*, p. 72; 'the cathedral chapter, and especially the cathedral *opera*, which Daibert had requested and established, took on his function as the spiritual focal point and authority for the state').

whilst numerous other historians consider that Daibert was indeed a papal legate.<sup>35</sup> Evidence for their argument comes from Bernold of Constance, who specifically terms Daibert's expedition a 'legationem' and adds that Daibert 'et illis in omnibus apostolice vice adesset et aeclesias in locis unde pagani expulsi sunt instauraret' ('that he should be there for them in the apostolic stead and should install churches in places from which pagans had been expelled').<sup>36</sup> Yet in the letter he co-wrote with the crusade leaders Godfrey of Bouillon and Raymond of Toulouse to Pope Paschal II in September 1099, Daibert styles himself simply 'the archbishop of Pisa'.<sup>37</sup> Matzke takes the view that this was because any legatine responsibility conferred on him had automatically ceased on Urban's death.<sup>38</sup> However, as Murray comments, this explanation is hard to reconcile with Daibert's subsequent actions, which included deposing the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem (who, according to a letter from Manasses of Rheims to Lambert of Arras in 1099, had been 'unanimously chosen'<sup>39</sup>) and having himself elevated to the position.<sup>40</sup>

Herein lie the roots of Daibert's unsavoury reputation in the East (Runciman calls him vain, ambitious, and dishonest<sup>41</sup>). Alan Murray in fact characterizes the period between his arrival and the elevation of Baldwin as King of Jerusalem as a dispute between monarchy and patriarchate,<sup>42</sup> and soon after Baldwin had been

<sup>35</sup> Alfons Becker, *Papst Urban II (1088–1099)*, 2 vols, MGH Schriften, 19.1/2 (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1964–88), II, 429. Those who consider him a legate include Steven Runciman, *A History of the Crusades*, vol. I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951), p. 299 (but see doubts expressed in n. 3 on the same page); Marco Tangheroni, 'Pisa, l'Islam, il Mediterraneo, la prima crociata: alcune considerazioni', in *Toscana e Terrasanta nel Medioevo*, ed. by Franco Cardini (Florence: Alinea Editrice, 1982), pp. 31–55 (p. 49); Bernard Hamilton, *The Latin Church in the Crusader States: The Secular Church* (London: Variorum, 1980), p. 14; and Andrew Jotischky, *Crusading and the Crusader States* (Harlow: Pearson, 2004), p. 135.

<sup>36</sup> *Bertholds und Bernolds Chroniken*, p. 410.

<sup>37</sup> *Die Kreuzzugsbriefe aus den Jahren 1088–1100*, ed. by Heinrich Hagenmeyer (Innsbruck: Wagnerischen Universitäts-Buchhandlung, 1901; repr., Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1973), no. 18, pp. 167–74. Daibert does not identify himself by name. The letter is conveniently translated in *First Crusade*, ed. by Peters, pp. 292–96.

<sup>38</sup> Matzke, *Daibert von Pisa*, p. 139.

<sup>39</sup> *Die Kreuzzugsbriefe*, ed. by Hagenmeyer, no. 20, pp. 175–76 (p. 176): 'in patriarchum Hierosolymitanae sedis unanimiter elegit'; trans. in *First Crusade*, ed. by Peters, p. 296.

<sup>40</sup> Matzke, *Daibert von Pisa*, pp. 139–41; Murray, review of Matzke, p. 955.

<sup>41</sup> Runciman, *History of the Crusades*, I, 299.

<sup>42</sup> Alan V. Murray, *The Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem: A Dynastic History 1099–1125* (Oxford: Linacre Unit for Prosopographical Research, 2000), pp. 81–93.

crowned king by Daibert on Christmas Day 1100, he engineered the Patriarch's suspension in 1101. Daibert managed to regain his position with the help of Tancred, Bohemond of Antioch's nephew, but was finally deposed in 1102.<sup>43</sup> (We might add that technically he was debarred from the patriarchate by his existing tenure of the Pisan archdiocese, an issue returned to below.) His only option was to appeal to Pope Paschal personally, and in fact he was reinstated, but on his way to reclaim the patriarchate he died at Messina in Sicily.

The question arises: why did Paschal reinstate Daibert, given that two separate legatine councils had removed him from the see of Jerusalem? In order to answer this question we need to review the events following the fall of the city to the Latins in 1099. As we have already seen, some sources report that the crusaders chose Arnulf of Choques, who had been one of two ancillary legates sent by Urban alongside Adhemar and whom Bernard Hamilton describes, with fitting understatement, as 'a controversial figure'.<sup>44</sup> Indeed, Raymond of Aguilers describes him thus:

he was not a subdeacon, but [...] of priestly birth and was accused of incontinence on our expedition, so much so that they shamelessly composed vulgar songs about him. But, led on by such ambition, and disregarding the decrees of the canons and the infamy of his birth, he stirred up the people against the good [clergy] and had himself raised upon the patriarchal seat.<sup>45</sup>

Fulcher of Chartres, meanwhile, ignores his election altogether, reporting only on Daibert's elevation.<sup>46</sup> Either way, Daibert certainly thought he acted with some kind of authority as soon as he landed in the East at Laodicea: as the letter sent from there to the Pope in September 1099 reported, he had 'established peace between Bohemond and our leaders', thereby easing the way for the Norman to come to Jerusalem and fulfil his crusading vow.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Hans Eberhard Mayer, *The Crusades*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 60–63, discusses this stage in Daibert's career.

<sup>44</sup> Hamilton, *Latin Church in the Crusader States*, pp. 12–13.

<sup>45</sup> Translation from *First Crusade*, ed. by Peters, p. 263. Raymond's chronicle ends before Daibert's arrival in the Holy Land — one wonders how he would have assessed the Pisan Archbishop's background and actions.

<sup>46</sup> Fulcher, book XXIII, chapter 20, in *First Crusade*, ed. by Peters, p. 98.

<sup>47</sup> *Kreuzzugsbriefe*, ed. by Hagenmeyer, p. 173: 'Cumque archiepiscopus Pisanus Boemundum et dominos nostros concordare fecisset.' Daibert is also seen as patriarch writing to all Catholics in the German kingdom appealing for aid to the crusade movement in April 1100: *ibid.*, no. 21, pp. 176–77.

Herein, in my view, lies the explanation we seek. For although most writers have noted the Archbishop's close working relationship with Bohemond (both Bohemond and Godfrey of Bouillon had done homage to the new Patriarch for their lands, and Daibert reciprocated in Bohemond's case by appointing Latin bishops to sees in the patriarchate of Antioch, under Bohemond's control but not technically within Daibert's remit as Patriarch of Jerusalem), few have developed this argument further to ask whether these two continued their mutually beneficial assistance when they left the Holy Land together, Daibert to appeal his deposition, Bohemond to seek reinforcements and money to maintain the Christian position in the East. Ute-Renate Blumenthal, reviewing the evidence for Paschal's reinstatement of Daibert, reminds us that they arrived in Italy together and that spring 1105 was 'the only possible date for the synod that discussed the case'.<sup>48</sup> Paschal wrote a letter after Daibert's death describing the reinstatement thus: 'Nos autem, in Laterani ecclesia Daiberti satisfactione suscepta, suo eum officio et Ierosolimitane sedi restituimus synodali iudicio' ('For we, having received satisfaction from Daibert at the church of the Lateran, have restored him to his office in Jerusalem by synodal judgement').<sup>49</sup> But what kind of 'satisfaction' did Paschal receive, and was Bohemond involved at all in the Pope's decision?

On the face of it, there is no direct evidence that Bohemond intervened directly, but Blumenthal's reconstruction of the participants in the 1105 Lateran Council which restored Daibert to power does include Bruno, Bishop of Segni, who attended the synod of Poitiers the following year with Bohemond. We can, then, suggest that whilst Bohemond was not physically present at the Lateran, he must have been in communication with the papacy during this period and cannot have ignored the opportunity to support Daibert, his political ally in the East. The Bari annals certainly report him in Italy in late summer of 1105.<sup>50</sup> What form Bohemond's intervention might have taken, of course, is impossible to reconstruct.

There remains the issue of Daibert's pluralism to explain.<sup>51</sup> Whilst in 1099 the reform of the Church was by no means complete, one would have expected some

<sup>48</sup> Ute-Renate Blumenthal, *The Early Councils of Pope Paschal II, 1100–1110* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 1978), p. 28.

<sup>49</sup> Blumenthal, *Early Councils of Pope Paschal II*, p. 27.

<sup>50</sup> R. B. Yewdale, *Bohemond I, Prince of Antioch* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1924), p. 107. The anonymous of Bari does not, however, place Bohemond in Rome as Yewdale asserts: *Anonimi Barensis Chronicon*, ed. by L. A. Muratori, *Rerum Italicarum Scriptores*, 5 (Milan, 1724), pp. 145–56.

<sup>51</sup> Murray, *Crusader Kingdom*, p. 83, calls Daibert 'a pluralist on a grand scale', but does not develop this line of discussion.

protests against his elevation to the patriarchate to point to this as a reason for debarring him; but the two depositions in the East appear to have focussed on the wholly secular and political concerns of financial irregularities and Daibert's attempts to block Baldwin's elevation to the kingdom of Jerusalem by summoning Bohemond.<sup>52</sup> One way to explain this anomaly would be to say that throughout the period 1099–1105, Daibert's tenure of the patriarchate remained largely unconfirmed by papal sanction (the exception being his brief restoration under intense pressure from Tancred by the second papal legate, Cardinal Robert of Paris, in 1102, before that legate tried and once again deposed him).<sup>53</sup> Or, to put it another way, the wholly unique combination of circumstances (the crusaders' success in capturing Jerusalem, the death of Urban, and the absence of a senior cleric since Adhemar's death) may have led to a situation where political expediency and the desire of the secular leaders (and the incoming pope, Paschal) to establish Latin Christianity in the East overrode the canonical obstacle that Daibert's continued tenure of the Pisan see presented to his election as patriarch. In short, the 'necessity for the Church' which Urban had invoked in order to install Daibert as Bishop of Pisa in 1088, despite all obstacles, worked again as a principle in 1105, although not explicitly expressed in these terms by Paschal.

In order to explore this issue further we need to return to Pisa. What was happening here as the Archbishop and Pisan fleet were operating in the Holy Land? Alan Murray is adamant that the Pisans 'did not elect a successor [to Daibert] until after Daibert's death', that is, until after June 1105, a view shared by Matzke.<sup>54</sup> Yet there is evidence of a certain Peter, styled 'episcopus' (note the demotion of the see) in later documents of the cathedral archive, and the editor of the document comments that this was Pietro Moriconi, elected to the see at some point between December 1104 and June 1105.<sup>55</sup> Whilst the document itself is too late for our purposes, the election is highly significant, and suggests that Daibert's return to the West to plead his case as Patriarch of Jerusalem triggered a response from the Pisans. Perhaps, in the changed political circumstances of the early twelfth century, they saw in Daibert's return a threat to their autonomy, despite his efforts to nurture

<sup>52</sup> In contrast, a letter of Paschal to the Pisans in August 1100 refers specifically to Arnulf's simony when explaining Daibert's appointment as patriarch: *Kreuzzugsbriefe*, ed. by Hagenmeyer, no. 23, pp. 179–81 (p. 180).

<sup>53</sup> On the two legates, see Hamilton, *Latin Church in the Crusader States*, pp. 54–56.

<sup>54</sup> Murray, *Crusader Kingdom*, p. 83 n., Matzke, *Daibert von Pisa*, p. 72.

<sup>55</sup> *Carte*, vol. IV: 1101–20 (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1969), no. 88, pp. 196–98.

legislative activity independent of the emperor in the city in 1090.<sup>56</sup> Perhaps it was that very independence of spirit which led to resistance to his return, a resistance which may have been orchestrated by pro-imperial elements in the city. Ironically, such a pre-emptive strike was rendered largely unnecessary by Paschal's decision: Daibert's restoration to the patriarchate opened the way for him to return to the East, not to Pisa. But his opponents in the city — and we must not discount the possibility that they included a cathedral chapter which rather enjoyed its independence during the 'Quasi-Sedisvakanz'<sup>57</sup> of 1099–1105 — could not have been sure of the outcome of the synod, and possibly sought insurance in their elevation of Peter. Either way, Peter's use of the title *episcopus* in the later document points to at least some unease about the circumstances of his elevation to the see on his part or that of the notary. His episcopate, which lasted until his death in 1119, did nothing to wipe away the memory of Daibert in the city. We have already seen Archbishop Roger's document of 1129 recalling a low point in city-prelate relations, but other charters from the cathedral archive provide evidence of Daibert as an energetic bishop whose actions were cited and then confirmed by later documents.<sup>58</sup>

He did not, however, enjoy the same level of local recognition accorded to some of his contemporary Italian bishops. Given that he had returned from participating in campaigns in the Holy Land, and that he had — if we accept Matzke's viewpoint — acted in what he believed to be the best interests of the Church throughout, it is somewhat surprising that Daibert was not celebrated as a scion of the reform movement or as a defender of the Christian faith. On contemporary evidence, we might have expected some sort of campaign to elevate him to minor sainthood after his death. Perhaps his death in Sicily or his too close relationship with the Norman Bohemond combined to prevent any groundswell of support for the idea

<sup>56</sup> Giovanni Tabacco reflects on the gradual transition to civic autonomy in Italy, and the bishop's position within the newly emergent political solutions, in *The Struggle for Power in Medieval Italy*, trans. by Rosalind Brown Jensen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 321–44. Crucially, he points to 'simultaneous presence' of royal, episcopal, and communal institutions as a better model than a 'chronological succession' from one to the next. Although he does not discuss Pisa at length, his model is highly applicable to the Pisan situation in the 1090s.

<sup>57</sup> The term is Matzke's: *Daibert von Pisa*, p. 72.

<sup>58</sup> See, e.g. *Reg. Pis.*, no. 510 (1174), where Daibert's patronage of the parish church (*plebis*) of Calcisane is cited to support a claim against the archbishopric by its current incumbents. We have already noted the preservation of Daibert's regulation of tower heights.

of a local cult in Pisa. Perhaps his failure to achieve martyrdom left him without a claim to sanctity (compare, for example, the later case of Bishop John Cacciafronte of Vicenza, whose murder in 1184 was presented as the work of enemies of the Church in the ensuing canonical inquest into his sanctity).<sup>59</sup>

Perhaps he was simply away from Pisa for too long, or his lack of family connections meant that there was no-one in the city to promote his cause. The communal period in Italy has been termed the age of the neighbourhood saint, and Daibert certainly did not fit this bill: we might compare here the case of saints Rainerius of Pisa (d. 1160), known for his visions, or Homobonus of Cremona (d. 1197), whose prayers and almsgiving, coupled with intense humility, won him admirers. Both were local laymen made good.<sup>60</sup> Or perhaps, ultimately, Daibert was too much of a political animal, too engaged with lay politics, too keen to grab at chances for elevation, and thus too controversial, to merit a makeover as a saint. Although Eddie Coleman makes the point that militarized bishops were not unusual in the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, with Anselm of Milan, for example, urging his flock to take up arms for the eastern expedition of 1101,<sup>61</sup> it is striking that claims to twelfth-century sainthood rested in local contexts — as represented by Rainerius and Homobonus, or by Bishop Ubaldo of Gubbio (d. 1160), who prayed from the walls of his besieged city and performed many acts of charity<sup>62</sup> — rather than in high-profile international adventures or engagement with the still-rumbling investiture controversy. True, Daibert enjoyed papal support at both ends of his clerical career, but this was against a background of continued hostility between papacy and empire, and the fragmentary evidence from which we can reconstruct the latter half of his life points to a man who did not shy away from episodes of extreme conflict. This bellicose quality, together with the Pisans' apparent rejection of Daibert even as their bishop in 1104/05, combined to leave him without any strong

<sup>59</sup> John Cacciafronte served as Bishop of Vicenza from 1177 until his violent death in 1184. The inquisition into his life and miracles is most recently edited in *I Documenti dell'Archivio Capitolare di Vicenza (1083–1259)*, ed. by F. Scarmoncin (Rome: Viella, 1999), pp. 82–89.

<sup>60</sup> Age of the neighbourhood saint: André Vauchez quoted in Augustine Thompson, O.P., *Cities of God: The Religion of the Italian Communes* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2005), pp. 180–81. Rainerius: Colin Morris, 'San Ranieri of Pisa: The Power and Limitations of Sanctity in Twelfth-Century Italy', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 45 (1994), 588–99.

<sup>61</sup> Edward Coleman, 'Sense of Community and Civic Identity in the Italian Communes', in *The Community, the Family and the Saint: Patterns of Power in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. by Joyce Hill and Mary Swan (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), pp. 45–60 (pp. 54–55).

<sup>62</sup> Thompson, *Cities of God*, p. 179.

support base by the time of his death. We should remember that Bohemond had left for another, ill-fated campaign against Byzantium, and Daibert's other ally, Countess Matilda, was too busy dealing with a renewed imperial threat to orchestrate a canonization campaign, despite having made several gifts to the Pisan church during Daibert's absence.

Richard Southern, however, points to the late eleventh century as a period when bishops were expected above all to defend the rights and privileges of their see, prompting them in 'the eager pursuit of even the most flimsy and far-fetched claims'. Success in doing so, he suggests would lead to the 'passionate support of their cathedral chapters', who were the prime movers in compiling accounts of their bishop's achievements.<sup>63</sup> Herein lies a possible explanation for the lack of attention paid to Daibert's career after his death. Although a few Pisan charters illustrate that Daibert was solicitous for the well-being of his see, and enjoyed the limited support of his cathedral chapter in some of the land transactions which this entailed, it would be hard to argue that he went out of his way to defend the see or enrich it, or that his canons were 'passionate' in his support. Significantly, Pope Urban's expansion and raising of the Pisan diocese to an archdiocese in 1091, encompassing Corsica, specifically cited Countess Matilda's intervention as the impetus for the grant, and Pope Honorius's confirmation of Corsican subjection, in the face of fierce Genoese opposition, also points to the *consilio* of others prompting Urban's gift.<sup>64</sup>

There is also little to suggest that Daibert's expedition to the East in 1099 brought any tangible benefits to the Pisan church: indeed, the surviving documents we have suggest that it was the Pisans' bitter rivals, the Genoese, whose cathedral came off better in the carve-up of rights and benefits in the Holy Land. For example, Daibert's great ally, Bohemond, had granted the Genoese a church, a warehouse (*fundicus*), thirty houses, and a well in Antioch in 1098, and King Baldwin in 1104 granted the Genoese spaces in Jerusalem and Jaffa and one third of the cities of Assur, Caesarea, and Acre, with a third of the revenue from the latter. True, the Genoese were eager supporters of the kingdom of Jerusalem, but we cannot discount the poor relationship between Daibert and Baldwin as a factor in the latter transaction.<sup>65</sup>

<sup>63</sup> R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (London: Penguin, 1970), p. 186.

<sup>64</sup> *Reg. Pis.*, no. 302 (1126), pp. 196–99.

<sup>65</sup> Bohemond: *Codice Diplomatico della Repubblica di Genova*, ed. by Cesare Imperiale (Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano, 1936), document 7, pp. 11–12; Baldwin: *ibid.*, document 15, pp. 20–22. See also the oaths sworn by the Genoese in return, *ibid.*, documents 8, pp. 12–13 and 16, pp. 22–23.

Had Daibert achieved martyrdom in the East, of course, things might have been rather different.

Finally, unlike his contemporaries Anselm of Lucca (1036–86) and Bruno of Segni (mid-eleventh century–1123), Daibert did not leave any important written contributions to the debates on lay investiture which might have secured his reputation as a defender of the rights of the wider Church. For the cathedral chapter of Pisa, therefore, there may have seemed little to celebrate in the career of their erstwhile head, and unlike Anselm and Ubaldo, Daibert did not find a biographer in his successor as they did with Bishops Rangerius and Teobaldo respectively.

Perhaps Daibert's career needed to be viewed from a distance in order for writers to make sense of it, and Matzke's portrayal of the Archbishop ultimately draws from the very positive assessment made by the later crusade historian William of Tyre.<sup>66</sup> Peter Edbury and John Gordon Rowe describe Daibert as 'one of William's heroes'.<sup>67</sup> If Daibert found no biographer among his contemporaries, what led the later writer to write so expansively about him some sixty years later? Edbury and Rowe argue that William's eulogy stems partly from having accepted and followed Raymond of Aguilers's bitter assessment of Arnulf of Choques, Daibert's predecessor as patriarch, but then demonstrate that Daibert worked well for the Bishop of Tyre as an example of how to negotiate the tricky issue of Church-king relations in the East.<sup>68</sup> This modelling, of course, means that we cannot take William's evidence about Daibert at face value.

Daibert's career, from obscurity in northern Italy, to his episcopate at Pisa and his journey East to the Holy Land, requires the reassembling of a large and disparate collection of references from narrative sources, papal letters, his own documents at Pisa, and his co-authored letter about the fall of Jerusalem. Although he was central to some of the discussions within these sources, the different stages of his career were often tangential to each other, and so were not recorded in as much detail as we should like. Nor did he attract the attention of a hagiographer or even, as the eleventh century gave way to the twelfth, a biographer. This leaves a great deal of room to interpret his actions and decisions, but it has also led historians to

<sup>66</sup> For example, Matzke's assertion that Daibert did not wish to become leader of Pisa, but simply to have spiritual authority over, and a good relationship with, its leading laymen (*Daibert von Pisa*, p. 64), clearly foreshadows his later assessment of Daibert's intentions as patriarch.

<sup>67</sup> Peter W. Edbury and John Gordon Rowe, *William of Tyre: Historian of the Latin East*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, Fourth Series, 8 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 88.

<sup>68</sup> Edbury and Rowe, *William of Tyre*, pp. 48–50 and 99–104.

pick out only those parts of his story relevant to their own interests. By reuniting Daibert's Pisan career with his years in Jerusalem, Michael Matzke has asked whether a continuity can be seen between these two separate parts. I believe that one important point of continuity does emerge — the need for the Latin Church, in exceptional circumstances (whether the investiture crisis or in the wake of conquest) to act pragmatically, and for necessity sometimes to take precedence over strict adherence to the ideals laid down in canon law. This was a lesson Daibert had surely learnt from Urban's strategy to install him as a bishop in the face of vocal opposition, and this is the point which is missed by those who criticize him for his actions in the East. He was no saint, but we cannot be sure that he ever aspired to be.

Perhaps, inevitably, Daibert's most effective memorialization therefore survives not in a hagiography compiled by a cathedral canon, but in the secular records of the Pisan consulate. As we have seen, his peacemaking on the heights of towers, and an earlier and now lost document in the same vein by Bishop Gerard, were repeatedly cited in later consular oaths. Moreover, the terms of their agreements were to be read out in public in the cathedral twice during each consulate. Now whilst we are of course dealing here with a statement of intention rather than deed, such a reading-out would have taken on a quasi-ritual quality. The setting alone, the cathedral, suggests that the saints — and possibly both defunct bishops, one Pisan, one not — were being called upon as silent witnesses to this regular act of reaffirmation and peacemaking. And the renewing of the oath contained in the settlement made by Daibert, with its threat of excommunication for transgressors, signals that ecclesiastical authority was still being invoked in partnership with secular power. Although few of those present would have remembered Daibert, his name and that of Gerard became powerful symbols of Pisan unity and identity, articulated out loud. As such Daibert, who was, as far as we know, never reunited with his chapter in the flesh (none of our sources states where he was buried), achieved some kind of return to the fold in spirit.

## EDITING A MEDIEVAL TEXT: THE CASE OF NICHOLAS OF CLAIRVAUX

Lena Wahlgren-Smith

The question of the best method for editing medieval texts has, as is well known, been hotly debated over the last century or so. Should one follow the Lachmann school and arrange one's manuscripts in a stemma, thus working back to the archetype, and then maybe attempt to reach the author's original text, by means of emendations? Or should one rather adhere to Bedier and edit the best manuscript? Through modern computer technology multiple editions have become a realistic option — though hardly ideal for perusing in bed. The choice of methods is frequently perceived in terms of a paradigm shift, as evinced by the term New Philology, clearly chosen to demonstrate that a new modern school, albeit now several generations old, has replaced that of yesterday.<sup>1</sup>

The problem is also frequently presented as one of classical versus medieval texts. According to this school of thinking, medieval writers, unlike the ancient Romans, had no concept of the individual author as the creator or possessor of his text; hence all medieval texts are to be regarded as anonymous traditions in a constant and legitimate state of flux. 'L'auteur n'est pas une idée médiévale', to quote

The following paper is based on my work on an edition of the letter collections of Nicholas of Clairvaux, which would never have been undertaken had it not been for Tim's generous encouragement and support.

<sup>1</sup> For an overview of the debate, see D. C. Greetham, *Textual Scholarship: An Introduction* (New York: Garland, 1994), pp. 295–346; also, A. Foulet and M. B. Speer, *On Editing Old French Texts* (Lawrence: Regents Press of Kansas, 1979), pp. 28–39. A whole issue of *Speculum* (vol. 65.1) was devoted to this discussion in 1990.

Bernard Cerquiglini.<sup>2</sup> It follows that the editor's task is to faithfully reproduce one or several stages of this process of change.

The difficulty with the wholesale adoption of this theory is that it assumes that all medieval literature, in all languages, all genres, and all periods, operates in the same way. A more extensive survey of medieval texts will soon show that this is not the case. There is a vast difference between, let us say, an anonymous chronicle, which may grow and change over the centuries, and a piece of autobiographical writing, such as the *De rebus a se gestis* of Gerald of Wales, where the author's persona is very strongly felt. In addition, there is evidence that some medieval authors were passionately concerned that their text should be handed down exactly as they wrote it, with no scribal alterations. A passage in Peter of Blois lamenting the incompetence of the copyists of his letters clearly indicates that he, at least, thought of himself as the proprietor of his text.<sup>3</sup>

The extent of the author's presence seems in part to be a question of genre. Some genres, such as chronicles and liturgical poetry, are normally anonymous; on the other hand, autobiographies and certain types of letter collections are more closely tied to one author. Medieval texts are therefore simply too diverse for a one-size-fits-all approach. Nor is it helpful to treat the choice of methods as one to be dictated primarily by fashion. It is true that the process of choosing a method, like the process of choosing new shoes, is to some extent going to be subject to fashion; yet both shoes and methods also have to fulfil a practical function, which one ignores at one's peril.

So, if neither fashion nor the age of the text are reliable guides, how is an editor to set about choosing her/his method? It seems to me that the problem is not

<sup>2</sup> Bernard Cerquiglini, *Éloge de la variante: histoire critique de la philologie* (Paris: Seuil, 1989), p. 25.

<sup>3</sup> Peter of Blois, ep. 210, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina*, ed. by J.-P. Migne (Paris: Garnier fratres et J.-P. Migne successores, 1880), 207, col. 492: 'Quidam post recessum vestrum ex parte vestra rogaverunt ut me epistolas meas, quas commendaveram aliis, eidem [eisdem] facere commendari. Quaesivi eis exemplar correctissimum, quaesierunt scriptorem, et datis omnibus quae necessaria illi erant, ille, duobus aut tribus quaternis mendose et turpiter scriptis, remotus est ab opere illo, nec postea invenire potuimus nisi falsarios et operarios iniquitatis [...] magna est scriptorum raritas et falsitas' ('After your departure certain men asked me on your behalf to entrust my letters, which I had entrusted to others, to them. I found them a most correct copy, they found a scribe, and when he had been given everything that was necessary and had written two or three quires incorrectly and in a vile fashion he was taken off this job, nor was I afterwards able to find anything but falsifiers and workers of iniquity [...] for the scarcity and deceit of scribes is great') (my translation).

unlike that facing the race of hyper-intelligent pan-dimensional beings in *The Hitchhikers' Guide to the Galaxy* who construct the computer Deep Thought in order to find out the Ultimate Answer. When the computer finally grinds to a halt, some seven and a half million years later, it turns out that the answer is of no use to its recipients, as they had no clear idea of what the question was. Editing is no different from other forms of research in that it demands and presupposes a clearly defined question. This question may not necessarily be the same for all editions. Various factors can influence the questions that are asked from textual material. The type of text is certainly one of these factors. A collection of liturgical sequences, for example, may well need different treatment to a treatise on theology.

Another important consideration is that of meeting the needs of the intended readership. An edition is not an end in itself; it is there as a tool to be used by the reader, and it is the editor's task to make sure that it is a useful tool. It is sometimes possible to foresee that a text's main usefulness will be as historical source material, providing information about the times or intentions of its first author. As a general rule, one would expect this to be the case with texts such as autobiographies, eyewitness accounts of historical events, and certain types of highly personal products, for example, Gerald of Wales's *Journey through Wales*. An edition of this type of material needs to work back, in as far as possible, to the original text. For this purpose no method has been found to replace that developed by the Lachmann school, supplemented by the critique of Pasquali and others.<sup>4</sup>

Another text may be more interesting as an example of a developing tradition; in this case, a multiple edition may be the optimal choice or, failing this, a best-manuscript edition. Ideal candidates for this type of treatment would be performance texts of different kinds (including liturgy), anonymous chronicles, annals, etc.

The intended readership forms a major part of this equation. Multiple editions are particularly suited for a readership of other scholars with an interest in text editions; the ordinary reader in search of a good story is less likely to appreciate such a cumbersome method of presentation. Again, historians are often likely to be more interested in an 'original version' approach, while students of literature may have completely different priorities.

Personal preference may seem a frivolous reason for choosing one's method, and certainly would be so if applied without due attention to the demands of the text; yet it is an observable fact that editors tend to gravitate towards the type of text they like to edit. There is probably nothing wrong in this, as long as personal preference is not allowed to override other, more scholarly considerations.

<sup>4</sup> Giorgio Pasquali, *Storia della tradizione e critica del testo* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1971).

The choice between the Lachmann and the New Philology school of editing is a crucial one, but it does not signal the end of an editor's choices. To illustrate some of the further stages of the editing process, I shall present a case study, namely the letter collection of Nicholas of Clairvaux, secretary to St Bernard. I have chosen this text simply because it is the one I happen to be editing at the moment. The problems presented by this particular text are not necessarily going to be reproduced in all traditions; I would agree with Armstrong that every tradition poses its own, specific problems and to some extent needs its own approach.<sup>5</sup>

Nicholas started out as a monk at the Cluniac abbey of Montieramy, but ran away to join the Cistercians at Clairvaux. Here he enjoyed a privileged position as Bernard's secretary, but was expelled in 1152 after Bernard had found him abusing his seal and falsifying his letters. He eventually returned to the Cluniacs and ended up as prior of a small Cluniac house in Troyes. He died sometime between 1175 and 1178.<sup>6</sup>

As far as we know, Nicholas published two letter collections in his lifetime. The first is the main collection. Prepared while Nicholas was still at Clairvaux, it contains just over fifty letters, most of them dating from the Clairvaux period, though a few seem to have been written just before. These are very monastic letters, mainly concerned with the standard topics of friendship and conversion.

<sup>5</sup> *The Medieval French 'Roman d'Alexandre'*, vol. II: *Version of Alexandre de Paris, Text*, ed. by E. C. Armstrong, D. L. Buffum, Bateman Edwards, and L. F. H. Lowe (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1937), pp. xviii–xix.

<sup>6</sup> The most important accounts of Nicholas's career are J. Mabillon, *Sancti Bernardi . . . opera omnia* (Paris: Gaume frères, 1839), I.2, 1617–30; M.-J.-J. Brial, *Histoire littéraire de la France*, vol. XIII (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1869), pp. 553–68; E. Vacandard, *Vie de S. Bernard*, vol. II (Paris: V. Lecoffre, 1895), pp. 384–86, 495–98; P. Rassow, 'Die Kanzlei St. Bernhards von Clairvaux', *Studien und Mitteilungen zur Geschichte des Benediktinerordens und seiner Zweige*, 34 (n.s. 3) (1913), 279–89; A. Steiger, 'Nikolaus, Mönch in Clairvaux', *Studien und Mitteilungen zur Geschichte des Benediktinerordens und seiner Zweige*, 38 (n.s. 7) (1917), 41–50; *The Letters of Peter the Venerable*, vols I and II, ed. by Giles Constable (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967); J. Benton, 'Nicolas de Clairvaux', in *Dictionnaire de Spiritualité*, vol. XI (Paris: G. Beauchesne et ses fils, 1981), cols 255–59; Benton, 'The Court of Champagne as a Literary Centre', *Speculum*, 36 (1961), pp. 551–91 (pp. 555–57). See also Benton, 'An Abusive Letter of Nicholas of Clairvaux for a Bishop of Auxerre, Possibly Blessed Hugh of Mâcon', *Mediaeval Studies*, 33 (1971), 365–70 (repr. in Benton, *Culture, Power and Personality in Medieval France* (London: Hambledon, 1991), pp. 123–28). An interesting discussion of Nicholas's personal relationships is found in Brian McGuire, *Friendship and the Community* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1988). Constable's informative chapter on Nicholas in *The Letters of Peter the Venerable* offers much valuable information about the dating of letters concerning Nicholas.

The second collection, the Champagne collection, consists of only five letters found in only one manuscript.<sup>7</sup> This collection is very interesting in its subject matter, as it was written after Nicholas's expulsion and dedicated to his new patron, Count Henry of Champagne. In consequence, it is aimed at pleasing a secular audience, and Nicholas has to project a totally different persona. The Cistercian atmosphere of the Clairvaux collection is missing; instead, the letters contain some vigorous abuse and a jocular request for wine. From the point of view of textual criticism, it is less demanding; editing here is simply a matter of transcribing the letters and correcting obvious mistakes, without the need to construct stemmas, to choose between variant readings, or to distinguish between scribal errors and authorial revisions.

The Clairvaux collection, which I intend to discuss here, poses more of an editorial challenge. The manuscript tradition is small: there are two extant manuscripts of the collection, Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Phillips MS 1719 and Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 3012. They both date from the early thirteenth century. There is also a seventeenth-century edition by Jean Picard, which is also the edition reproduced in the *Patrologia Latina* (vol. 196). These, then, are our text witnesses, and the question is how to deal with them.

The first task, clearly, is to decide on the general type of edition aimed at. In the present case, there seems little reason in trying to reproduce any sort of later tradition of the letters of Nicholas. There is indeed little evidence that any intentional alterations were ever made to the text after it left its author's hand — in fact, nobody seems to have taken much of an interest in the collection at all. It follows that no gains are to be made by focussing on any later tradition.

On the other hand, the collection is very interesting as a historical document and a literary monument to this unusual Cistercian monk. The edition therefore needs to focus on the text as conceived by Nicholas. In other words, we are looking at something more or less Lachmannian: comparing the manuscripts, attempting to construct a stemma, and eventually trying to work our way back to the archetype and from there to Nicholas's own text.

This decision leads on to a further choice. On investigation, it is clear that there is not one 'Nicholas's own text' to be reckoned with, but two. A quick look at the

<sup>7</sup> This collection was described by John F. Benton in an unpublished article, 'The Second Letter Collection of Nicholas of Clairvaux'. See also Benton, 'Court of Champagne', pp. 555–57; Benton, 'Abusive Letter'; and Benton, 'Nicolas de Clairvaux à la recherche du vin d'Auxerre, d'après une lettre inédite du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle', *Annales de Bourgogne*, 34 (1962), 252–55.

beginning of the collection reveals deliberate rewritings, in all likelihood by the author. Compare the following:

<p>Dilecto fratri N., frater Nicolaus, spiritum consilii et consolationis. Tandem reuersa sunt in me uiscera mea, et cor meum rediit ad me et ego ad cor meum. Felix dies in qua tibi scribere proposui, sed illa multo felicior, in qua tu rescribere uoluisti. Non recedet memoria eius et usque in seculum non derelinquetur; sed erit mihi clara atque solemnitas et eternis gaudiis inlarescens. <i>P, Picard</i></p>	<p>Suo L. suus N. salutem. Tandem reuersa sunt in me uiscera mea, et cor meum rediit ad me et ego ad cor meum. Felix dies in qua tibi scribere proposui, sed illa multo felicior, in qua tu rescribere uoluisti. Non recedet memoria eius et usque in seculum non derelinquetur; sed erit mihi clara atque solemnitas et continuis diebus inlarescens. <i>B</i></p>
<p>To his beloved brother N. Brother Nicholas (sends) the spirit of counsel and consolation. At last my bowels have returned to me and my heart has come back to me and I to my heart. Happy the day in which I decided to write to you, but much happier that in which you were willing to write back. The memory of it shall not pass away and will not forsake me even unto eternity, but I will regard it as a solemn and festive day and one splendid with eternal joys.</p>	<p>To his L. his N. (sends) greeting. At last my bowels have returned to me and my heart has come back to me and I to my heart. Happy the day in which I decided to write to you, but much happier that in which you were willing to write back. The memory of it shall not pass away and will not forsake me even unto eternity, but I will regard it as a solemn and festive day and one forever splendid.</p>

Here one can see quite clearly that the *salutatio* has been changed, from the *Suo suus* formula, which is Nicholas's plainest standard version, to one that is still very conventional but slightly more upmarket. It is possible, but not certain, that the change of initial is due to scribal error. Further down in the same passage, *eternis gaudiis* could hardly be a scribal error for *continuis diebus*. It is a more elegant expression and also has a rhythmical ending, which seems to be something aimed at in the Paris manuscript. In other words, the text is made more elegant and more literary all round. This is a trend that continues throughout the Paris manuscript. In particular, the *salutationes* seem to have had a lot of information removed and replaced by rhetoric. This is a similar process to that which Pasquali reports for Petrarch's letters, when they were prepared for publication by the author, Petrarch's aim being to eliminate anything too casual or closely related to the moment, in order to make them more fit for eternity.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Pasquali, *Storia*, p. 457.

I therefore believe that the Berlin manuscript (*B*), which has a plainer style and more information, represents an earlier version, perhaps a copy of Nicholas's own letter book, whereas the Paris manuscript (*P*) is probably a copy of Nicholas's revised edition, prepared for publication. Picard's edition has been taken from a manuscript closely related to *P*, but probably not from *P*. We are thus dealing not with one original text, but with two. This is quite a common situation for letter collections; they are very prone to revision even after publication.<sup>9</sup>

The next choice to be made is which version to print. There may be cases where it is relevant to print more than one version, but this is not going to be an option for the present edition, as the facing page of the book will be required for the English translation.

There are two options here: either to focus on the text as a source for the historical events, which would mean editing the earliest version, or to view the collection as a work of art and try to reconstruct the author's finished version. Both are equally valid and the choice must to some extent be one of personal preference. After weighing the options, I have decided to choose the latter alternative, as this type of letter collection is a very literary product and is likely to be studied as such.

Having decided to concentrate on the author's latest version, it might be thought that the safest method would be to ignore *B* altogether and print an edition based on *P* and possibly *Picard*. Unfortunately, due to the state of this particular tradition, this is not going to be possible. *P* and *Picard* are very closely related and share a number of errors derived from a common ancestor. These are not always easily emended, so *B* still has an essential function to fill. Also, *P* no longer contains the entire collection.

*Picard*'s edition contains fifty-three letters, which is probably the extent of the original collection. *B* starts with ep. 3 and goes on to ep. 42. It is impossible to know whether this was the extent of the earlier version of the collection or not. *P* has suffered mechanical damage: it starts halfway through ep. 29, and ends halfway through ep. 49. It is likely that it originally contained the same letters as *Picard*. Interestingly enough, all our three witnesses have exactly the same letter order; Nicholas, unlike some of his contemporaries, does not appear to have been interested in rearranging his collection to study the aesthetic effect.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> See for instance, C. P. Schriber, *The Letter Collections of Arnulf of Lisieux*, Texts and Studies in Medieval Religion, 72 (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen, 1997), pp. 4–14, and Lena Wahlgren, 'The Letter Collections of Peter of Blois', *Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia*, 58 (1993), 41–67.

<sup>10</sup> A parallel can be seen here with Martina Hartmann's discussion of Wibald of Stavelot's letter collection in 'Timothy Reuter and the Edition of Wibald of Stavelot's Letter Collection for the MGH', this volume.

For the first two letters, then, *Picard* is our only source. *B* and *Picard* both provide evidence from ep. 3 to the beginning of ep. 28. For epp. 28½ to 42, all three manuscripts are available. From ep. 43 to the beginning of ep. 49 we have the evidence of *P* and *Picard*. Finally, for the last four and a half letters, *Picard* is our sole source. In other words, we end up in a situation where we constantly have to supplement one source with another.

The main difficulty with this procedure is to know what is to be considered scribal error and what may represent an author's variant. This is why ideally we would want to get as much of our text as possible from  $\pi$  (the combined evidence of *P* and *Picard*), since this represents the edition we are after. Unfortunately, though *P* has clearly been quite carefully copied, yet nobody is perfect and there are times when the  $\pi$  text makes no sense at all. An example is furnished by ep. 33, addressed to the Archdeacon Philip of Liège, who is invited to join the Cistercians. The passage in question starts:

Ab ecclesia igitur et cum illo, cuius nomen portas, adiunge te ad currum istum, ubi milia  
letantium et Dominus in eis.  
Ab ecclesia: Accelera *B*<sup>11</sup>

Even without the witness of *B*, it would be clear that there is something wrong with the reading *Ab ecclesia* [. . .]. It sounds as if Philip would have to leave the Catholic Church to become a Cistercian, which surely cannot be the case. We are dealing here with a simple scribal error: 'accla' misread as 'aecclesia'. Perhaps I should have been able to work this particular problem out on palaeographical grounds, but then not all corrupt passages are as obviously wrong as this one. The problem, clearly, is knowing when to use *B* and when not to.

The Lachmannian stemmatic method is helpful in places. When *B* agrees with one of the witnesses on the other side, we can safely assume that this is the text of the archetype, and that there has been no authorial revision in this place. In cases where the split is between *B* and  $\pi$  and there is a possibility that the differences may represent authorial revisions, I follow the  $\pi$  text.

As anyone who has worked with medieval manuscripts will appreciate, there is an enormous grey area here. The tradition contains a great number of variant readings which may equally well be the result of authorial reshaping or simply of natural variation following from scribal inattention. Changes in word order or slight

<sup>11</sup> The  $\pi$  version would mean: 'From the church, therefore, and with him whose name you bear, join thyself to this chariot, where there are thousands of them that rejoice and the Lord is among them' (my translation). The *B* text offers the more intelligible 'Make haste' for 'From the church'.

variations in wording may be the result of deliberate stylistic editing — sometimes there is reason to believe they are — but on the other hand, it is well known that these things happen whenever manuscripts are copied. My example is taken out of ep. 25, a letter of recommendation written on behalf of the Abbot of Celle:

Omnia nostra sua sunt: et sua, nostra sunt; nos in illo et ipse in nobis. Vnus est de ordine suo, in quo domino abbati nostro, amico uestro multum complacuit. Inuenit ipse abbatiam, cui preest, et turpatam, et turbatam a malitia habitantium in ea.<sup>12</sup>  
 nostra sua: sua nostra *B*; sua, nostra: nostra sua *B*; de ordine: de ordine et in ordine *B*;  
 habitantium: inhabitantium *B*

*B* and  $\pi$  have a different word order in the first sentence. This could be a sign of revision but may equally well be due to a slip of the pen. Again  $\pi$  has *de ordine*, *B* has *de ordine et in ordine*. The extra words in *B* add nothing to the sense of the passage, but this is a very Nicholas expression, found in several other letters. Has it fallen out of the revised version by accident, or did Nicholas get bored with it? It is impossible to tell. Most of the variants are so slight that one might think the selection is immaterial — except that one cannot go on forever sitting on the editorial fence; sooner or later it is necessary to come to a decision.

For the letters towards the end where *P* and *Picard* are the only sources, there is no need to worry about authorial revision — but on the other hand no help is to be had from the stemma. In cases of doubt, I follow the old-fashioned editorial principle of following the text witness which experience shows to be the better, in this case *P*.

*Picard* is not a brilliant editor and finds it particularly hard to deal with abbreviations. However, he does very occasionally come up with a good emendation of the  $\pi$  text; when this happens, there is no reason not to adopt his reading simply because he read *patria* for *persona* in the previous paragraph. For the letters at the very beginning and end of the collection, *Picard* is the only source; in other words, my only choice is between *Picard*'s text and editorial emendations. Comparison with the other parts of the collection indicates that *Picard* is likely to be in need of emendation from time to time.

The real difficulty starts with letters found only in *B* and *Picard*. How do you weigh a moderately good manuscript of another authorial version of your text against a badly transmitted version of the text you want? Sometimes the reading in one of these is obviously corrupt, and then it may be possible to use the other

<sup>12</sup> 'Everything of ours is his and everything of his is ours; we are in him and he in us. He is the only one of his order whom our lord abbot, your friend, has greatly approved. He found the monastery that he rules both defiled and disturbed by the wickedness of those that dwell therein.'

side for correction. When the situation is less clear-cut an assessment of the characteristics of the three witnesses, gleaned from the letters where they appear, helps to identify the sort of mistakes they are individually prone to. I keep a little list of the peculiarities of each source by my desk and start by discounting those. For instance, I know the *B* scribe is very prone to mechanical errors, such as skipping a line because his eye jumps. I also keep an eye out for possible corruptions due to the misreading of abbreviations in *Picard*. If there is absolutely nothing else to go by, I will side with *Picard*, as representing the  $\pi$  side.

It must be added that Nicholas's own peculiarities make him fairly easy to emend. His writing is very regular, with perfectly balanced phrases, so that any sentence where the components are not balanced is suspect. Look for instance at the following passage, in which Nicholas describes the bounty of Nature in providing the animals with appropriate means of defence:

Denique boui setam, uolucris plumam, et dentes et ungues et cornua concessit, ut habeant unde uim uel inferant uel repellant. (ep. 49)<sup>13</sup>

It is obvious that the text as it stands cannot be correct. There is a clear lack of balance between two creatures listed and the three means of defence; besides, neither birds nor bulls defend themselves with teeth. The teeth must belong to some third party who has dropped out of the text, but who? There are plenty of potential candidates: A wolf? A lion? A tiger? I suspected that the passage was a quotation and finally managed to run it down in Sidonius's letters. Now I know the elusive creature is a boar.<sup>14</sup>

Quotations are very helpful for editing Nicholas, as his text is almost cento-like in its constant interweaving of other authors' material. He also keeps repeating his best lines, which makes it possible to check him against himself in cases of doubt. Sometimes, indeed, it is tempting to overuse the aid furnished by the quotations. In the following passage from ep. 35, all three witnesses agree that the destroyers in question are like bulls in their arrogance, yea bulls in their voracity:

Sed subuersores sunt tecum, immo tu cum subuersoribus esse cepisti: illos duos loquor, uulpes astu, fastu leones, ad superbiendum tauros, immo tauros ad consumendum. (ep. 35)

<sup>13</sup> 'In short, it has given to the ox its bristle, to the bird its feather, and teeth and claws and horn, that they may have something with which to attack or defend themselves.'

<sup>14</sup> Sidonius VII, 14: 'Quippe cum praebeat tamquam ab aduerso boui pilus, apro saeta, uolucris pluma uestitum (quibus insuper, ut uim uel inferant uel repellant, cornu, dens, unguis arma genuina sunt).'

This, then, is presumably the text that Nicholas wrote. What he 'ought to' have written is 'ad superbiendum tauros, minotaurus ad consumendum'. This would be a great stylistic improvement — but if Nicholas happened to have a faulty copy of Sidonius's letters, it is hardly my place to help him out.

Slowly this text is pulling together. Though modern computer-based methods for sorting manuscripts are hardly needed for such a small tradition, yet the invention of databases has proved a great help in identifying sources and checking the author's own language. Thus far, I have made just over fifty emendations of my own, most of them very small. It is a constant balancing act: the stemma against authorial revisions, the evidence of the manuscripts against the evidence of Nicholas's sources. But this is how the Lachmannian method works. The stemma was never intended to stand in splendid isolation, and do all the work, without account of individual circumstances.

Housman famously compared the successful textual critic to a dog hunting for fleas.<sup>15</sup> This sounds an exaggeration, and I'm not sure all dogs are such efficient hunters, seeing that there is still a great demand for flea powder. Still, it remains true that individual problems require individual solutions and that the ground may be shifting even within the same work by the same author. No method, whether ancient or modern, computer-generated or paper-shuffling, is ever going to absolve us from the need to attempt to apply thought to textual criticism.

<sup>15</sup> A. E. Housman, 'The Application of Thought to Textual Criticism', *Proceedings of the Classical Association*, 18 (1921), 67–84 (p. 69).



## TIMOTHY REUTER AND THE EDITION OF WIBALD OF STAVELOT'S LETTER COLLECTION FOR THE MGH

Martina Hartmann

Abbot Wibald of Stavelot and Malmédy accompanied Prof. Dr Timothy Alan Reuter in his academic life for more than thirty years, from England to Germany and back to England. In 1968 Tim went to Oxford and started his research for a dissertation on 'The Papal Schism, the Empire and the West 1159–69' under the supervision of Karl Leyser, as we all know.<sup>1</sup> In 1969 Tim received a scholarship for a year in Vienna and attended the famous 'Kurs' of the so called 'Hilfswissenschaften' at the Austrian Institute of Historical Research. In this Institute several medievalists worked or had worked for the MGH on editions of the charters of the Staufen rulers like Conrad III and Frederick Barbarossa.<sup>2</sup> It was therefore an ideal and probably stimulating research location for Tim to work for his doctorate. I still do not know exactly when Tim got the idea of editing Wibald's letter collection,<sup>3</sup> although I asked some people who were in Vienna in

I am very grateful to Georgina Reuter for correcting my English mistakes and improving my English style.

<sup>1</sup> Timothy Reuter, 'The Papal Schism, the Empire and the West 1159–1169' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Oxford University, 1975). The thesis, along with Tim's other papers and extensive collection of books, is now held by the German Historical Institute in London.

<sup>2</sup> See *Die Urkunden Konrads III. und seines Sohnes Heinrich*, ed. by Friedrich Hausman, MGH Diplomata regum et imperatorum Germaniae, 9 (Vienna: Hermann Böhlau Nachfolger, 1969) and *Die Urkunden Friedrichs I.*, ed. by Heinrich Appelt, MGH Diplomata regum et imperatorum Germaniae, 10.1–5 (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1975–90).

<sup>3</sup> See Timothy Reuter, 'Die Briefsammlung des Abtes Wibald von Stablo und Corvey', in *Heinrich der Löwe und seine Zeit: Herrschaft und Repräsentation der Welfen, 1125–1235*, ed. by Jochen Luckhardt and Franz Niehoff, 3 vols (Munich: Hirmer, 1995), I, 561–62, and Reuter, 'Wibald von Stablo und Corvey', *Verfasserlexicon*, 10 (1999), 979–81.

those times and remembered him very well, but I think it must have been in Vienna that he became interested in this extraordinary source, which is to a certain extent the prelude to the topic of his dissertation — Wibald died in 1158. Anyway, Tim obviously became fascinated by Wibald and never lost this fascination.

And Wibald is indeed a very fascinating figure of the Middle Ages:<sup>4</sup> he was born in 1098 as a member of a ministerial/knightly family connected with Stavelot, and studied in Liège in the 1110s, before he converted to monastic life and entered the Benedictine monastery of Waulsort. In 1118 he was appointed as *scolasticus* in Stavelot and became abbot of the monastery in 1131. He played an important role on the second Italian expedition of King Lothar III in the years 1136 and 1137 and for a very short time he was appointed the Abbot of Montecassino (September – November 1137). After Lothar's death in 1138 Wibald was closely connected with the 'movers and shakers', in Tim's words,<sup>5</sup> who elected the Staufer Conrad III as the new German king. From then on to Conrad's death in 1152, Wibald played an extremely significant role in the King's court. In 1146 he also became the abbot of the monastery of Corvey. When Conrad went on his expedition to Italy, Wibald was in the inner circle of those who advised the young king Henry (VI), the nominal ruler of Germany in Conrad's absence on the second crusade. After the King's return Wibald played an important part in the diplomatic relations with Byzantium and with the Curia in Rome to prepare Conrad's Italian expedition which should have brought him the emperor's crown. After Conrad's death in 1152 — without having become emperor of the West — and the election of Frederick Barbarossa as his successor, Wibald lost his great influence at court and with the king, but was still appreciated for diplomatic missions to Saxony and to Byzantium.

Perhaps Tim was attracted by Wibald because of his role as mediator and communicator between East and West, similar to the efforts of 'the greatest Englishman', St Boniface,<sup>6</sup> and to Tim's own efforts concerning English and German medievalists and international scientific research.

<sup>4</sup> See Freya Stephan-Kühn, 'Wibald als Abt von Stablo und Corvey und im Dienst Konrads III' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Köln, 1973) and Franz-Josef Jakobi, *Wibald von Stablo und Corvey (1098–1158): benediktinischer Abt in der frühen Stauferzeit* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1979).

<sup>5</sup> Concerning this I have used Tim's unpublished application to the British Academy and his papers on Wibald cited above, note 3.

<sup>6</sup> *The Greatest Englishman: Essays on St Boniface and the Church at Crediton*, ed. by Timothy Reuter (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1980). On his University of Southampton Web page, Tim noted, 'the publisher chose the title, not me'.

Wibald seems to have spent more time in administering his monasteries in the last years of his life. Nevertheless, he led a diplomatic mission to Byzantium in 1156/57 and again in 1157/58, in the course of which he died at Monastir in Macedonia on 15 July 1158. About a year later his brother Ermenbald was able to achieve Wibald's burial in the abbey of Stavelot. This took place on 26 July 1159,<sup>7</sup> exactly 845 years before the last day of the commemorative conference for Tim at Southampton.

Why do we know so much about this cosmopolitan abbot of the early Staufer era? It is because Wibald left, as Tim wrote, 'the largest letter-book from the high Middle Ages to survive as an original manuscript'.<sup>8</sup> The manuscript, today kept in the Archives of Liège, contains about 450 letters from the period 1146–57, that is, not from the whole influential time of Wibald's life, but from a good part of it. About a third of these are letters written by Wibald, another third are letters written to him, and the last third are letters between third parties, among these drafts of letters composed by Wibald in the names of Conrad III or Frederick Barbarossa.<sup>9</sup> Besides the letter book there also exist twenty-five letters written by or in the name of Wibald, which come from different sources and support our knowledge about him before he became Abbot of Corvey.<sup>10</sup> So we get a very good overall impression of high political affairs in that period, the governance of Wibald's monasteries, and his intellectual and artistic interests and friendships.

The letters are very different in their length: some only contain about one hundred words, whilst some others have more than two thousand or three thousand words. When we inquire into the aim of compiling the letter book, it is very likely that Wibald wanted to have it as a 'portable archive', as Tim had suggested, when travelling between Stavelot, Corvey, the German court, and Byzantium.

<sup>7</sup> Jakobi, *Wibald*, pp. 164–68.

<sup>8</sup> Tim published two papers specifically about the letter collection: 'Gedenküberlieferung und -praxis im Briefbuch Wibalds von Stablo', in *Der Liber Vitae von Corvey*, ed. by Karl Schmid and Joachim Wollasch, 2 vols (Wiesbaden: Aschendorff, 1989), II, 161–77; and 'Rechtliche Argumentation in den Briefen Wibalds von Stablo', in *Papsttum, Kirche und Recht im Mittelalter: Festschrift für Horst Fuhrmann zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. by Hubert Mordek (Tübingen: Niermeyer, 1991), pp. 251–64.

<sup>9</sup> See Reuter, 'Gedenküberlieferung', p. 161; Stephan-Kühn, 'Wibald', pp. 7–16; Jakobi, *Wibald*, pp. 24–29.

<sup>10</sup> On these see Martina Hartmann, 'Zur Korrespondenz Wibalds von Stablo und Corvey (1098–1158)', in *Editionswissenschaftliche Kolloquium 2003/2004: Historiographie, Briefe und Korrespondenzen, Editorische Methoden*, ed. by Matthias Thumser and Janusz Tandeci (Toruń: Verlag der Nikolaus-Kopernikus-Universität Thorn, 2005), pp. 181–201.

Unfortunately the letter book is incomplete, missing some folios at the beginning and end. There are some late medieval copies as well as some modern, which show the great value and interest of Wibald's collection even in the Middle Ages, but they were all made after the loss of the folios.

In 1864 Wibald's letter book was edited by the German scholar Philipp Jaffé,<sup>11</sup> who provided an 'excellent text', in Tim's view, 'but the commentary now leaves almost everything to be desired, and the dating of the letters is in many cases either imprecise or wrong. Most problematic is the fact that Jaffé rearranged the letters into a supposedly chronological order, thus concealing the vital evidence provided by the manuscript itself, which can be shown to have been put together like a register, with regular entries of material generally in chronological order'.<sup>12</sup> An introduction, as required in modern editions, was also lacking. In the 1930s the Austrian medievalist Heinz Zatschek published a study about the 'Codex Wibaldi' and its different scribes.<sup>13</sup> He also planned to make a new edition for the MGH, but after the Second World War Wibald no longer appeared in the yearly report about the projects of the MGH published in *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters*.

Wibald reappeared in 1975, when Horst Fuhrmann, the former president of the MGH, wrote that 'Doctor Timothy Reuter, who has become very familiar with the material at the Institute in Vienna, has been charged by the Directorate of the Monumenta Germaniae Historica with a new edition of Wibald's letter collection for the MGH'.<sup>14</sup> This means that Tim, then a young English scholar of twenty-eight years, had gained recognition by the German Institute and German medievalists and was entrusted with the edition of Wibald six years before he was appointed as a *wissenschaftlicher Mitarbeiter* in Munich. There he found, as Henrietta Leyser called it, his 'academic home' for about twelve years, from September 1981 to December 1993.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup> *Monumenta Corbeiensia*, ed. by Philipp Jaffé, *Bibliotheca Rerum Germanicarum*, 1 (Berlin: Neudruck der Ausgabe, 1864), pp. 76–498. The *editio princeps* was made by Edmond Martène and Ursin Durand, *Veterum Scriptorum et Monumentorum . . . amplissima collectio*, vol. II (Paris, 1724).

<sup>12</sup> See above, note 5.

<sup>13</sup> Heinz Zatschek, 'Wibald von Stablo: Studien zur Geschichte der Reichskanzlei und der Reichspolitik unter den älteren Staufern', *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung, Ergänzungsband*, 10 (1928), 237–495.

<sup>14</sup> Horst Fuhrmann, 'Bericht für das Jahr 1974/5', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters*, 31 (1975), p. iii.

<sup>15</sup> See the obituaries of Tim by Henrietta Leyser in *German History*, 21 (2003), 82–85; by Janet Nelson in *The Guardian*, 17 October 2002 (<[www.guardian.co.uk/news/2002/oct/17/](http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/2002/oct/17/)

As Tim remarked on his Web page, his time in Munich was more and more absorbed by computer technology, where he did a lot of pioneering work on text editing with the help of the computer, in writing programs especially for the Gratian Concordance,<sup>16</sup> and assisting with the MGH e-Texts. He also had to help his colleagues at the MGH who were, needless to say, less brilliant in working with computers than he was. Sometimes, when too many helpless colleagues sitting in front of their computers were calling for Tim's help, he gave very short advice, the well-known English acronym 'RTFM'.

In his outline for the British Academy Tim himself wrote that he made 'little progress on the Wibald edition between 1985 and [his] departure from Munich', because of the demands of the electronic world in which he was so interested. Another problem was the fact that it was very difficult for Tim, after leaving Munich and coming to Southampton, to get all the specialized German editions, studies, and books about the history of Wibald's time, for example about the monasteries or bishoprics Wibald was in contact with and about the local German rulers in the different territories, with whom Wibald had problems.

After these years in Munich and then in Southampton, during which Tim was not able to work intensively on the edition because of several other important tasks, he made a new and, as he thought, final attempt to complete the edition of Wibald's letter book in 2001–02, supported by the British Academy and the Leverhulme Trust, which had already supported Tim's research for his dissertation in Vienna in 1969. Probably he knew very well that he had to come to the MGH in Munich to complete and finish the commentary for the edition.

On 11 September 2002 Tim wrote to the British Academy that he hoped to complete the edition including the introduction and supported by 'a set of covering studies on the Wibald letter collection', although his medical problems had by that time become serious. On 24 September he drafted a letter, never sent, to the current president of the MGH, Rudolf Schieffer, which dealt with several problems concerning the introduction, the presentation of the text, and the commentary of the Wibald edition. It was probably too hard for Tim with his illness to concentrate on complicated historical problems concerning the collection, but what he did in those months before his death was to check about two thousand passages of the letters which looked as if they might be citations of some kind.

guardianobituaries.obituaries>); and by Horst Fuhrmann in *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 21 October 2002, 38.

<sup>16</sup> Timothy Reuter and Gabriel Silagi, *Wortkonkordanz zum Decretum Gratiani*, MGH Hilfsmittel, 10 (Munich: MGH, 1990).

With the help of several databases he was able to identify nearly 1500 quotations from the Bible or from liturgical, classical, and patristic sources. He still hoped to be able to complete the edition and not to leave an *Editionsleiche* or 'corpse edition', as he wrote in a cynical mood in August 2002.<sup>17</sup> He still believed in the medical prognosis that there were about five years of life left for him before 'falling off my twig' as he wrote in an email to my husband and me in the summer. And that probably would have been a lot of time to make further progress on the Wibald edition and some other projects.

When my husband and I came to Southampton in December 2002, nearly two months after Tim's death, to see his widow Georgina, we tried to collect Tim's material on the edition, supported by her and by Professor Mark Roseman. Step by step we found in Tim's computer and on his desk what we were looking for. The editor left on his PC a complete text of the 450 letters of Wibald. He had begun an *apparatus criticus* of all items which has to be arranged and completed, and will also be checked against the original manuscript in Liège for those passages which are difficult to see on microfilms or photographs. An examination of the Liège manuscript is also necessary in order to identify the different hands involved in its composition. In his 1928 study, mentioned above, the Austrian scholar Heinz Zatschek thought to identify forty hands — what Tim judged as 'certainly the phantom products of palaeographical hypercriticism'.<sup>18</sup> Tim reduced the number down to twenty hands, but was not sure whether his palaeographical analysis was correct. In the meantime the German medievalist and palaeographical expert Hartmut Hoffmann made a study of the Wibald manuscript in order to support the edition of the letter book.<sup>19</sup> This will be helpful because one cannot answer the question as to whether it was monks of Stavelot or Corvey who helped Abbot Wibald to copy his correspondence into his portable archive without a study of the scriptorium. Hoffmann looked through Tim's drafts for these problems and found them useful, so Tim had not collected this material in vain.

Wibald's letter collection is a text of huge length which may explain why it was such a long-lasting task to prepare an edition. In my years at Munich I had gained

<sup>17</sup> Wilfried Hartmann, 'Nachruf Timothy Reuter', *Deutsches Archiv*, 58 (2002), 891–92.

<sup>18</sup> Zatschek, 'Wibald'; Reuter, outline for the British Academy.

<sup>19</sup> Hartmut Hoffmann, 'Das Briefbuch Wibalds von Stablo', *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters*, 63 (2007), 41–69. Hoffmann has done earlier work on this theme: Hartmut Hoffmann, *Bücher und Urkunden aus Helmarshausen und Corvey*, Studien und Texte, 4 (Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 1992), especially pp. 47–77 for the manuscripts from Corvey and 58–62 for the manuscript of the letter collection.

— besides my own editions — experience in finishing an edition that someone else had begun, so I felt able to take on Wibald. I finally began work on this in September 2004, after the Deutsches Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) awarded me a scholarship for two years to finish the edition, which is surely not enough but a good start. Tim's material is now back in Munich in the library of the MGH, and with the help of a relatively new program Tim did not know, the Classical Text Editor (CTE), I have begun to complete the text, the apparatus, and the commentary of the different letters — so Tim's efforts to help me with working with a computer have borne fruit! I hope that Wibald's letter book will be published in the MGH series 'Die Briefe der deutschen Kaiserzeit' in order to present, as Tim described it, 'a small and rather insignificant-looking manuscript which is one of the most unusual letter collections of a century rich in letter-collections'.



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